

CAMPBELL'S  
FOREIGN SEMI-MONTHLY MAGAZINE.

NOVEMBER 1, 1843.

From the Quarterly Review.

*The Life of Sir David Wilkie, R. A.* By Allan Cunningham. 3 vols. 8vo. London. 1843.

It would not be fair to subject this book to strict criticism; for it was begun after Mr. Cunningham's health had been shaken, and the closing page was written the very night before he died, and it is obvious that not one chapter had undergone that ultimate revision in the course of which repetitions may be expected to disappear, hasty thoughts to be suppressed, and vague roundabout paragraphs replaced by clear and compact sentences. Though never an accurate writer, we cannot doubt that if he had been permitted to superintend his last labour through the press, he would have presented it to the world in a shape very different from what it now wears. By far the most important part of his materials, however—Wilkie's own letters—required no editor but the printer: they fill a large share of these bulky volumes; and if they had been published by themselves, without note or comment, they would have been sufficient to form a valuable work—one calculated to raise essentially the general estimation of this eminent artist's mental powers and resources. Sir David's diaries, too, would probably, under happier circumstances, have remained much as we see them—though the extracts might have been greatly abridged without loss of interest. From Mr. Cunningham's very loose narrative, and these remains of the painter himself, we shall endeavour to put together a brief summary of his personal story; and a few specimens

of his criticism on art may be introduced as we proceed.

We do not find that Wilkie was ever esteemed a *gentle* name in Scotland; but yet Sir David had a pedigree. It is stated that his progenitors had been for four hundred years proprietors of a farm within a few miles of Edinburgh, consisting of some sixty acres, which they cultivated themselves: and that various other small landholders of the same name, all traditionally connected in blood, were established in the same vicinity. It is, therefore, not improbable that they inherited in subdivisions the possessions of a once considerable family. The only person of any distinction among them previous to the painter's generation was the author of the "Epigoniad," who was minister of Ratho, in the midst of his kindred, before he attained a chair in the University of St. Andrews, and to whose kindness Sir David's father was under weighty obligations at the outset of life. The grandfather had been forced to sell his acres, but continued on the spot as tenant. It seems doubtful whether he could have educated his son for the Kirk, (that great object of ambition to the families of Scotch farmers,) but for the assistance of the poetical professor; and to the same influence the young and worthy aspirant owed, in due season, his settlement as minister of Cults, a small rural living near St. Andrews, and in the gift of the University. His stipend, at first sixty-eight pounds, was never more than one hundred pounds per annum, with a glebe of three or four acres; and no one of the good man's three wives seems to have brought him any dowry. The third of these, Isabella

Lister, daughter of the farmer of Pitlessie Mill (one of the ruling elders of the parish,) was the mother of David Wilkie—who was born at the manse of Cults, Nov. 18, 1785. The minister had a large family, and David was his third son.

The Rev. Mr. Wilkie published, in 1794, a volume entitled "The Theory of Interest," which, says Allan Cunningham, "good judges have pronounced a profound and able work, and which Mr. Pitt, it is said, consulted in all his calculations." For "it is said," it would probably be safe to read "it was said—at Cults." It does not appear that he ever again figured as an author, or that this book was in any way serviceable to his basket and store. "Interest" remained with Mr. Wilkie a matter of theory.

David's excellent mother was his sole teacher until he could read his Bible. He was then, at seven years of age, entered at the parish-school of Pitlessie, about a mile from his father's manse; and here (with the exception of a few months at another parish-school, where the master was supposed to be somewhat more active) the future R.A. continued a daily attendant until he reached his fourteenth winter; by which time, in the narrow circumstances of the family, it was necessary that he should make choice of his profession.

Not many callings were within the scope of his selection. By the kindness of a neighbouring peer his eldest brother had obtained an India cadetship; but the outfit and voyage had pressed heavily on the manse, and a start so expensive for any of the younger lads was out of the question. David had been anything but a forward scholar—he had shown no fondness nor aptness for either grammar or arithmetic:—if he had exhibited any lively predilection for his book, the worthy minister would, no doubt, have strained hard to give him a college education, and set him out in his own line of life, or as a surgeon. As things were, there was perhaps hardly any choice but between the plough and mill of his mother's family, and the hazardous, as it must have seemed, indulgence of his own early and only bent to the art of the pencil. This passion had begun to be visible even from his infancy. As soon as he could hold a piece of chalk, the walls of the nursery were scribbled over with dogs, cats, trees, and houses. At school the margin of every manual had more of his attention than the text. While his fellows played, he de-

lighted to lie near them on the turf sketching their faces and figures on his slate. By degrees he attained such skill, that wandering beggars and pedlars sat willingly to him for their portraits. He gave his evening hours, whenever he could steal out unobserved, to the village smithy, where he fed his eye on the vivid contrasts of light and shade, and the strenuous attitudes of man and horse. Every rude wooden-cut that came in his way was copied and recopied. Late in life he mentioned, as an important event in his boyish history, the arrival at the manse, in company with a volume of the "Statistical Account," of a print of Sir John Sinclair represented in trows and plaid as colonel of a fencible regiment. This heroic figure made a powerful impression—from that hour, he said, his ambition was stirred, and its object fixed. We may infer that the manse of Cults was the barest of its kind. It could hardly have boasted the usual John Knox and George Buchanan over the mantelpiece.

It is recorded that young David in those days gave sad cause of offence, and excited grievous scandal in the parish. He must needs carry his pencil with him to the kirk, and on the flyleaf of Bible or psalm-book would, while his reverend parent preached his best, be catching the features of some devout Mause Headrigg or critical Andrew Fairservice in the congregation. These sacrilegious doings, if report may be trusted, attained their climax in a sketch of the minister himself, delineated in a moment of diabolical temptation, with a soft bit of charcoal, on the capacious bald head of the venerable miller of Pitlessie, whom David had perceived to be sunk in profound slumber before the sermon reached its "nineteenthly"—a double, not to say treble, irreverence, which, if the limner had been a few years older, or had lived a generation sooner, would, no doubt, have introduced him to a personal acquaintance with the discipline of the Kirk Session. As it was, it probably cost him no supper or cold porridge, besides many a stern word and look at home—and abroad, in what was to him *the world*, a general chorus of the old Scots proverb, "Manse-bairns are seldom *menseful*."\*

In all other points, however,—save indeed as to his school-learning—he was from the first a credit to the manse of Cults—a quiet

\* *Anglicè*, "discreet, seemly, decent in conduct or manners." See Jamieson.

boy, affectionate in his family circle, steady in all his ways. His father and mother being highly esteemed in their district, two or three of the principal families near them appear to have observed with interest his zeal and progress in the use of his pencil. He was admitted freely to see and examine whatever works of art their houses contained—but these seem to have been few. A couple of Sir Joshuas were within reach—nothing else of any consequence is mentioned—but the lad pricked up his ears when he was given to understand that the first painter of England was, like himself, a poor country clergyman's son. And there was other encouragement, not so high, but nearer home. Martin, then, or not long before, a flourishing portrait painter in Edinburgh, was brother to a Fife minister. One or two specimens of his skill were the distinction of a manse not far from Culter; and to David, no doubt, Martin seemed and sounded almost as great as Reynolds. He now brooded day and night over the possibility of getting access to the sphere of art, and making that the business of his existence.

He found by and by that gratuitous instruction in drawing and painting was to be had at Edinburgh. The Board of Trustees for the improvement of Manufactures maintained a small establishment for such purposes; their Teacher, Graham, had already some promising pupils: but admission was guarded: the funds were designed to promote a definite object: in strictness, no candidate could be accepted unless he produced specimens of his handiwork, from which it might be fairly inferred that he possessed talents worthy of being cultivated at the public expense, with a view to the ultimate advantage of our muslins and crockery by the introduction of better *patterns*; and though it was impossible, and would have been absurd, to interpret such a regulation literally, considerable rigour was used in the examination of the young pupil's preliminary drawings. The minister of Culter, regarding David's performances with a parent's eye, was not afraid of this ordeal: and it being at length settled that the boy should, if possible, be bred for an artist, he proceeded to Edinburgh with him and his tiny portfolio. Strange to say, the examination of the specimens was in those days entrusted, not to the teacher of the Trustees' school, but to their secretary—Mr. George Thomson, well known for his connexion with the poet Burns. Thomson

pronounced the primitiæ of Wilkie quite worthless, and the minister and his son returned in distress to the manse. The great man of the next parish, the late Lord Leven, heard of their discomfiture; and intimated that if they would risk a second crossing of the Firth, with a letter from him in lieu of David's portfolio, he thought it likely they might have better luck. And so it proved. The Earl's recommendation was all-potent with Thomson, or with the Trustees; and David Wilkie, in his fifteenth summer, was installed among the pupils of Graham, and left to regulate his life out of the academy entirely by his own prudence; with, we may be sure, a full sense that, if he transgressed the very sharpest bounds in his personal expenditure, he must, as Cowper expresses it,

“Pinch his parents black and blue.”

Mr. Graham was a kind as well as clever man; if he had a large share of vanity about him, much of it took that direction which is fortunately usual among teachers. The assiduity of the boy conciliated his good will, and he ere long began to prophesy that the Trustees would yet have reason to rejoice that their rules had not been exactly complied with at the day of his matriculation. Wilkie, on his part, retained to the last a feeling of what he owed to Lord Leven's intervention. He used to shake his head when any of his Presbyterian friends declaimed against “patronage,” and tell them that was a cry in which he for one could never join.

The seminary was open for two hours before breakfast, and again for two hours in the evening, so as to leave the best part of the day at the students' free disposal; a necessary arrangement, since most of these were trades' apprentices, or subsisting by their labour in some shop or manufactory—“house-painters, engravers, weavers, &c.” Young Wilkie was one of the few who could afford to give all their hours to art—one of the very few who did so. The even, resolute steadiness of his diligence is attested by the master, and by two or three of his fellow-pupils, themselves in the sequel distinguished. He was the first at the school, and the last to leave it; and the intervening hours were spent in solitary labour in his little garret in the Old Town of Edinburgh, near the College—or in observing and sketching from life, moving, bustling life, in the market-place, the auction-rooms, on the quays of



Leith, among the fishermen and their wives, in the vast stone quarries near the city—wherever he could see human beings exerting their strength, mixing with each other, and transacting real business. If he had a holiday, it was given to some fair or *tryste* for the sale of cattle in the neighbourhood, where mountaineers from the North or the South, Gael or Saxon, in their as yet picturesque diversity of costume, were trafficking or carousing in the midst of flocks and herds, and strings of rough ponies. From such studies he returned with quickened and enlightened curiosity to the casts from the antique at the Academy, which were not many, and “so much the better for me,” said Wilkie, “for I had to work on them until I had got every thing about them by heart.” He had a natural turn for mechanism—kept carpenter’s tools always by him, and, while meditating on his teacher’s lessons, delighted to occupy his hands by fashioning shelves, stools, a chair, or a table, whatever was wanted to make his nook more comfortable. The habit of measuring and adjusting things with critical nicety was excellent training for his eye—and he by degrees constructed little models of men and other objects in clay or wood, by drawing from which he was fast attaining accuracy in perspective, and the management of light and shade. There were then at the Academy no living models, nor as yet were there any persons in Edinburgh who made or eked out a livelihood, as many do now, by sitting to students of art in private. But David, as often as he could, cajoled some good-humoured fish-wife or venerable beggar into his garret; and even his blue-gowns seem to have been contented with no better payment than a *spring* on the fiddle—for he was also a self-taught musician, and could play the popular reels and strathspeys already to the admiration of such connoisseurs. Such was the education of Wilkie at the Edinburgh Academy—sedate, sober, thrifty, entirely inoffensive, for three or four years, from fifteen till he was near nineteen. He thus, in the midst of a great town, in the immediate neighbourhood of a crowded University, laboured on with one object steadfastly before him, seduced by no temptation, gradually winning for himself the respectful admiration of the youthful compeers, in whose tricks and jollities he refrained from taking any part. Such an example is indeed well worth preservation.

The most eminent of his fellow-students, the present President of the Scotch Academy, Sir William Allan, R.A., who was, we believe, rather his senior, says, “he seemed to have even at that early period an innate feeling for character and expression;” and he instances a drawing of the master, Graham, done when he was under seventeen, “so full of expression, done with such a masterly hand as seemed then little less than a miracle.” “The progress he made was marvellous; every thing he attempted indicated a knowledge far beyond his years; and he soon took up that position in art which he maintained to the last.”

The first of Wilkie’s attempts in oil was done in competition for the annual prize at this little academy. The subject was to be from *Macbeth*—and the scene he selected was Lady Macduff defending her children from the murderers. He did not gain the premium; but his picture is said to have been more admired by the students than the successful one. When he appeared in London a few years afterwards, he seems to have been described as “the young Scotchman that had done a remarkable thing from *Macbeth*.” The chief merit is said to have been in the head of young Macduff. The missing of the prize neither disquieted nor discouraged him. It is probable he already felt that this was not an attempt in the direction most suitable for his hand. Sir W. Allan tells us that though he had not seen any picture either by Teniers or Ostade, he hung over their etchings and engravings, whenever he could reach them—declaring that these were the true masters; and we hear without surprise that, before he quitted Edinburgh, he had settled in his own mind that the grand object which he ought to strive for was the application of art like theirs to the familiar domestic life and manners of Scotland—a wide field, as yet untouched save by David Allan, whose reputation was then high in the north, and who was unquestionably a man of strong powers, though rather a felicitous caricaturist than a Scottish Hogarth. In this department Wilkie made his first serious effort—to which probably Sir W. Allan alludes—in the course of his seventeenth year. It was a sketch on pasteboard, representing some rustics wrangling over a revolutionary newspaper—the germ of one of his master-works, the *Village Politicians*—and, according to Mr. Cunningham, in itself a most noticeable perform-



ance:—"the true first-fruit of his genius, ill-digested and crude, but exhibiting a singular force, and a sort of intrepid wildness of conception and character, much tamed down in the subsequent picture." We have not seen this curiosity. If, as Mr. Cunningham states, "the central group" is nearly what we have in the *Village Politicians*, Sir W. Allan might well say that Wilkie soon took up the position in art on which his real fame was ultimately to depend. No finer group, none exhibiting a happier contrast of character, ever came from his easel, from Hogarth's, or from Jan Steen's.

Early in 1804 Wilkie returned to Cults. Perhaps he felt that he had learned as much as Graham could teach him—without doubt he was eager to relieve his parents from the expense of maintaining him at Edinburgh; and, strongly as he had fixed his ambition on the path which afterwards led him to fame and fortune, he conceived that he might keep that before him, and yet make enough meanwhile for his own support by portraiture. At nineteen he was established at the manse as an artist; and the respect in which his family were held, with the good report which preceded and followed him from the academy, procured him by degrees a variety of sitters. He painted several of the neighbouring gentry and clergy—some, miniatures on ivory—a few in life-size in oils—the most on small canvasses in dimensions about the same that we find in the best pictures of his prime. Several of these early productions were in the exhibition of his works here a year ago. It was impossible to doubt that he had caught staring likenesses; the drawing is stiff, but not false: what colour there was seemed hard enough. The best specimens were, we thought, from members of his own family—one, of his sister, showed real grace. When he had exhausted the patronage of the adjacent parishes, he transferred his easel to Kinghorn, thence to St. Andrews, and finally to Aberdeen: at all which places he is said to have received some encouragement, but it could hardly have been much, otherwise he would not have shifted ground so often in the course of a few months—nor painted a sign-post to defray a bill *à la Morland*.\* This trade of likeness-making had not, however, been his only occupation. Be-

fore the year expired he had made a picture on canvass from his pasteboard sketch of the *Politicians*—a picture by no means equal to that which he subsequently did in London on the same subject—but still a very remarkable one, differing little indeed from that as to design and drawing. He had also painted a scene from the tragedy of Douglas, of which the biographer, who appears to have seen it, speaks coldly; and another, which he praises highly, from the *Gentle Shepherd*. But, above all, Wilkie had, during his leisure hours, while at the paternal manse, conceived and carried through innumerable stages of sketching and re-sketching, up almost to its ultimate completion, that rich performance—the richest in some respects of all that he ever finished—his *Pitlessie Fair*.

It is on a canvass of forty-four by twenty-five inches: into this space the young artist has compressed such a panorama as never before was and never again will be produced of the whole rural life of a province. There are groups enough to have given the foundation of a dozen masterpieces: in fact we may trace here in embryo a very large proportion of all the forms that ever his genius animated: it is to Wilkie much what the *Border Minstrelsy* is to Scott. The figures, in number one hundred and forty, are almost all portraits—for the greater part portraits from Cults itself and the two or three next parishes—the "old familiar faces" which he had been studying and sketching ever since he could hold a pencil. The universal reality is so complete, in spite of the crude and raw colouring, that one feels hardly more temptation to artistic criticism than in the case of a photogenic fixture of living things, lurid and atmosphereless, but all, as far it goes, literal fact;—no invention, no creation by rule, but the breathing world of Fife seen as through a glass darkly. A neighbouring laird, Mr. Kinnear of Kinloch, perceived that there must be something extraordinary in the awkward sheepish lad who had stereotyped so many evanescent glimpses of character and feeling—and he offered 25*l.* for the picture: a sum which Wilkie and all Cults considered as magnificent.\*

Poor as Scotland is (or was) in works of art, Wilkie in the course of his peregrina-

\* This piece, a man watering a grey horse, was soon rescued from the sign-post. It is said to be a very good early specimen of Wilkie.

\* We wonder the *Pitlessie Fair* has never been engraved. Surely a careful lithograph at least (from Mr. Joseph Nash) would be highly acceptable to the public.

tions had now seen a few good pictures, and many engravings from the great masters. His exquisite eye spoke to a clear judgment—he had the courage of genius, saw distinctly that he wanted much which others had attained, and felt that he had within him a power which, with opportunity, could carry him far. The liberality (for such it was) of Mr. Kinnear was well-timed backing for his inward aspirations. He immediately called in whatever small sums were due to him from his sitters; and finding himself master of in all about 60*l.*, he thought he was now justified in prudence to start for London, and give himself the advantage of joining the pupils of the Royal Academy. His money seemed to him a little fortune—it would maintain him for a year, perhaps for two, in the great city—he might obtain some employment in portraiture amidst Scotch residents to eke out his resources—if the worst came to the worst, he had Fife to fall back upon, for there at least the Pitlessie Fair had now given him a name. The minister was alarmed at the suggestion of such a daring adventure—fears and trepidations manifold agitated the domestic synod—but David was resolute—the 60*l.* was his own—and he embarked.

He came up while the annual Exhibition (1805) occupied Somerset House, at which season the academy teaching was of necessity suspended; so he had leisure to examine the actual performance of his most eminent contemporaries, before entering on his own new career of study. The period was not a splendid one for his department. Neither of the elder painters of our time who alone will be mentioned hereafter with Wilkie had as yet displayed their capacities fully. He saw that many of the exhibitors were far before him, or any painter he had hitherto come into contact with, in the mechanism of their art: but poverty of spirit was as evident. From every morning in Somerset House he returned to his garret near the New Road with clearer perceptions of his own deficiencies, and with stronger conviction that he had that in him which might by and by command attention in the capital.

As soon as the professors resumed their teaching, he submitted a specimen of his drawing, and was accepted as a probationary student. He then conducted himself in all respects as he had done when at the feet of Graham—and was speedily remarked as the most pains-taking of the pupils. He

submitted to every drudgery, not only without reluctance but with hourly growing eagerness; took his place among the regular students in December: and before he had exhausted his 60*l.*—that is before he had been nine or ten months in London—was recognised by his teachers and by his fellows as something very different from what was expected when he first appeared among them. For in truth his outward advantages, never great, were then of the smallest. His figure was tall but lanky, and seemingly nerveless; his firm square forehead, his keen bright blue eye, and the singular mixture of sagacity, determination, and rich quaint humour about his mouth, were not observed so quickly as the very ordinary Scotch character of the rest of his physiognomy—his pale but not clear complexion, sleek sandy hair, prominent cheek-bones, snubbish nose, and ill-drawn retreating chin.\* His air was rustic, his accent broad, and the prudential brevity and coldness of his speech and address were not attractive among the gay decisive young southerners who alrerdly criticised their betters, and quizzed their teachers, as if themselves were all securely booked for the first niches in the Temple of Fame, and in the irregularity of their personal habits asserted the claims of self-dubbed genius.

Wilkie had brought a few letters from Scotland, but none of them proved of any use to him;—the chilling reception of that from which he had expected most is understood to have suggested one of his cleverest minor pictures some years afterwards. Frugal and abstemious as he was—dining at a shilling ordinary and cleaning his own shoes to save a penny—London turned out a more expensive place than had been dreamed of at Cults. The diligent student's purse became lighter and lighter—and no sitter turned up for his leisure hours. He began to despond; but could not take heart to communicate all he feared to his father. He had, however, been obliged to draw on the old minister for 10*l.*, and moreover to incur debt to the extent of 20*l.*, before the school was again shut up for the recurring Exhibition. Two or three of his Fife sketches and pictures had been exposed at a shop window, and they had been sold, but for very small sums—and not one of them to any purchaser

\* The best *likeness* of Wilkie is, we think, by himself—the Clown behind Alfred in the Neat-herd's Cottage.

who thought fit to make inquiry concerning the artist. Wilkie's situation, in short, was becoming seriously alarming to him, when his father mentioned that there was great ambition in the manse to have a piano-forte for his sister, and desired him to make inquiry where a small second-hand one could be obtained at the cheapest cost. David in the course of his walks observed the shop of Mr. Stodart, instrument-maker to the royal family, and looked in, not in hope of finding what he was in quest of, but of gaining information where a humble article was most likely to be found. The master happened to be in the shop—Wilkie entered into conversation with him—the northern tongue did not displease Stodart, for he had married a Scotch woman—he asked the visiter's name, and, behold, it was the same as Mrs. Stodart's maiden one. The young artist was invited to take tea with his countrywoman—and this casual acquaintance proved the turning-point of his fortunes. We do not attach exaggerated importance to such an occurrence. It was impossible that Wilkie should have long been hid; but Mr. Stodart's kindness relieved him from immediate embarrassments, and saved him probably a hard uphill struggle.

He had luckily sent down for his Pitlessie in hopes of being able to improve it. All his other specimens were gone except this, and the first sketch of the Village Politicians. Mr. Stodart was surprised at what he saw—his wife delighted; and they lost no time in proclaiming the discovery to their friends and customers, known to have taste in the arts. This procured him some letters: he worked hard, and was beginning to make a few guineas from time to time, when the late Lord Mansfield chanced to call one morning at Mr. Stodart's, and saw in the back shop the pasteboard sketch. He was sufficiently interested to seek out Wilkie and the Pitlessie Fair. His lordship immediately asked him to paint on canvass the subject of the sketch, and desired him to name his own price. Wilkie named 15*l*. Lord Mansfield said, "You had better consult some of your brother artists," and so left him. Wilkie never intimated that he had found any reason to raise his estimate. Lord Mansfield and his lady came frequently to view the work in its progress, and made Wilkie's promising talents the subject of conversation, by which he was of course much benefitted. Before the picture was done the petty studio had been visited by some of the most liberal

patrons of art then in England—Sir George Beaumont, the Earl of Mulgrave, and the late Marquis of Lansdowne—and they had each commissioned a picture, agreeing to terms considerably higher than Wilkie would have ventured to hint at when Lord Mansfield first conversed with him. The upshot was, that when he had finished his *Village Politicians*, he was offered, from two different quarters, more money for it than he had thought of when the picture was begun; and—not quite clearly seeing that, as he had gone on with the work without whispering any dissatisfaction as to the price originally proposed, it was done and finished for nobody but Lord Mansfield, and was, in fact, his lordship's property the moment he chose to pay for it—the inexperienced artist conceived that he might have a right to accept the highest of the subsequent biddings. He forgot that "silence speaks consent." If he had fancied 15*l*. too little, he ought to have said so at an early stage. As things stood, had the picture turned out inferior to what Lord Mansfield anticipated from the sketch, his lordship would in law, as well as in honour, have been bound to accept it, and pay his 15*l*. Every bargain is two-sided. Wilkie referred the matter to his father, and he instantly decided that the paction was valid. David, on this, signified, in handsome enough phrase, to Lord Mansfield that the picture was his lordship's for 15*l*. The Earl sat down to write his cheque, and it was for 30*l*., the highest price that any one had bid for the piece. We should have been ashamed to bestow so many words on this story, but that Mr. Cunningham chooses to expatiate upon it as discreditable to Lord Mansfield. That the picture was worth intrinsically not only 30*l*., but a great deal more than 300*l*., is nothing to the purpose. Wilkie's fame was not in existence when the commission was given—it was his picture that established it. Allan Cunningham was, we apprehend, the best and manliest character that can be pointed out among our men of letters risen from lowly life; but we regret to see that he had not altogether escaped one unworthy strain of feeling, too often exemplified in such men's writings. Throughout this book he misses no opportunity, and seizes many a most absurd one, for a sneer at "the aristocracy," to whose patronage no British artist was ever more conspicuously indebted, first and last, than David Wilkie.

At the dinner on the opening of the Exhi-



bition in 1806, Mr. Angerstein took occasion to point to the Village Politicians as the star of the collection; and such it was all but universally esteemed and proclaimed. At the age of twenty-one, Wilkie found himself acknowledged as in the very first rank of his profession.

During his period of anxiety and penury, his health, never robust, had been a good deal shattered. The success that kindled his eye left his cheek hollow. He excited a real interest as well as admiration. Sir George Beaumont, in the most delicate manner, intimated that he was ready to advance the full price of one or even of two pictures; and not only Sir George, but several others whose commissions he had soon accepted, Lord Mulgrave, Mr. Whitbread, Lord Lansdowne, all suggested that the paintings ordered might be executed with convenience to him and to the advantage of his health, at their country seats, to which they themselves were about to retire for the summer. We need not observe that neither talent nor distress, nor both together, could have produced such invitations from such persons: there must have been something that commanded respect and confidence in the manners and bearing of the youthful artist. Such friends as these knew the world and their own place in it too well to stand upon little trifles of address; they knew the only danger was of his being too soon master of all the superficial nothings that he wanted—too soon not only initiated, but over much enamoured in the silken labyrinth. In this new sphere his accent was no disadvantage—rather the contrary; for English ladies and gentlemen never can accurately distinguish between what is merely national in the northern intonation and what is vulgar; and we dare say Wilkie's Fife brogue was to them on a par with the ancient forensic dialect of Henry Dundas, or the mellowed Doric of Walter Scott. But, above all, his habitual taciturnity did so young a man no damage. Such patrons as his must have seen enough of life, public as well as private, to be of King Solomon's opinion, that "By the multitude of words shalt thou know the voice of a fool."

He who but a few months ago was wandering from one sea-port to another, thinking himself a lucky man when a skipper indulged his wife by sitting for his picture, price twenty shillings—had made one step over formidable barriers, and was domesticated, during as many weeks as he pleased, in one palace

after another—his mornings occupied with the art which was his constant delight (as indeed it is to almost all who practise it, even the sorriest Tinto of the tribe), while his evenings were spent in society the most elegant that ever this country or this world could produce, and often also the most instructive. In Sir George Beaumont especially he had before him the very model of the English gentleman of the highest class—a far-descended opulent man, devoted to literature and art as enthusiastically as any who must live by the brain and the hand, but dignifying his rank and his fine talents by every social and domestic virtue; as full of sense and worth as of learning and taste, polished with all the grace of courts, yet like Chaucer's knight, "as modest as a maid." It is not too much to say that Sir George treated Wilkie with a paternal kindness; he opened not only his purse to him but his mind—was always ready to countenance and support—and, utterly incapable of officious dictation, dropping ever and anon hints of advice and warning, both as to art and mankind, whereby Wilkie profited largely: all which (though not, to say the truth, a man remarkable for warmth of feeling) he remembered to his dying hour with reverential gratitude.

Of the many wise and far-sighted passages in Sir George's early letters to his young friend, we quote one or two (July and August, 1806):—

"I hope you make liberal use of the inestimable privilege of denying yourself: I know what importunities must beset you. Nothing, I think, can hurt you but being too soon satisfied, and fancying yourself at the end of your labours, which will never be; but you bore the gust of applause so steadily and sensibly that I am satisfied you never will forget what is due to your art and to yourself."

Again:—

"Though I shall have great pleasure in possessing the picture you are painting, I have ten times more in the prospect of seeing you improve your talents to the utmost. Pursue your studies without intermission. Associate with older men than yourself: do not suffer poor-minded and interested persons to render you discontented. Remember yours is a liberal profession—never suffer it to degenerate into a trade: the more you elevate your mind the more you will be likely to succeed. *Be not persuaded to deviate from the line Nature and inclination have marked out for you.*"

From one only of these precepts did Wilkie ever swerve, and we know the result of that aberration, but it was yet distant.

The reader of Mr. Cunningham's book will be satisfied that Sir George had seen reason for thinking that every one of these admonitions might be serviceable at this critical period. It is obvious enough that Wilkie was beset with all the indicated dangers. Especially it was to be feared that—fresh from the sole society of young aspirants, not one of whom had made, or probably ever would make, a grand leap like his—he might concede too much sympathy to their impatience with the unappreciating world, and fancy himself neglected as well as them, because all the external honours of his craft were not heaped on him at once by the constituted organs of authority in art, as the rightful ratification of the general verdict. At all times, in this department as in others, there is a government and an opposition. In those days the latter was unusually violent, and it had influential supporters out of doors. Newspaper criticism—almost the only printed criticism that artists think of—was flourishing. Very clever, but very conceited and coxcombical persons—all bitterly dissatisfied with whatever belonged in any shape to the established system of things—were the prominent manufacturers of the paragraphs on which young painters and sculptors gazed with awe and terror, as the very oracles of judgment—to them the sibylline leaves of destiny. Some of the ablest of Wilkie's fellow-students at Somerset House appear to have early pledged themselves to the views and doctrines of this "poor-minded and discontented" fraternity; and one or two of them lament at this hour, we suspect, the infatuation that enthralled them. From some scattered circumstances it would seem that there was a serious risk of Wilkie's being led astray with these the companions of his shilling ordinary and shoe-brushing days. It was to this Sir George Beaumont alluded in his counsel to associate with men older than himself; and Wilkie had sense enough to understand, and firmness enough to adopt, that counsel. And though Allan Cunningham includes the Royal Academy among the incarnations of hateful "aristocracy," and drops sundry indignant hints about reluctance, and coldness and disfavour, in the reception of Wilkie and his earlier performances by the governing powers of Somerset House, it is to be observed that he does not

allege one distinct fact or authenticated testimony in support of his sentimental insinuations. On the contrary, it seems evident that the heads of Wilkie's profession welcomed him cordially, and treated him as one in the sure path to all its honours, from the very first hour that brought any adequate specimen of his talents within their view. They, already admitted to the advantages of superior society, felt none of that petty jealousy at seeing another of their own order invited to maintain its distinction in the eyes of the world, which may very probably have rankled in the bosoms of the modern Salvators and Guidos whose claims had not yet been recognised, except among the *dilettanti* of the green-room and Aristarchs of the Sunday print. Wilkie did exactly as Chantrey did, in the face of similar temptations, about the same time, and with the same consequences. He perceived that the *radicalism* of art was part and parcel of the then ludicrously imbecile Jacobinism of the empire, and backed out on precisely the grounds on which Horne Tooke himself had the candour and manliness to recommend a similar step to the rising sculptor of the age.

Perhaps the chief advantage derived from this procedure was that he escaped from those playhouse-haunting habits which ruined for ever so many ardent spirits then entering on the kindred careers of the fine arts and the belles-lettres. His notes often point to the difficulty he had in separating himself from young brother-artists whose paradise was the pit. He went occasionally, like other sensible people, to the theatre, and enjoyed the high pleasure it could then yield when Cooke, and Young, and all the Kembles were in their splendour, and the comic stage could show at once Bannister, and Liston, and Mathews; but he never became a habitual hanger-on of the scene, so as to lose, as many did, all sense of the difference between real life and manners and the lamp-lit counterfeit—in England generally, as respects the sort of life that his genius naturally pointed to, a most coarse and tawdry caricature—or, if the difference remained perceptible, fancy that the mimicry bodied forth an ideal worthy of being seriously aimed at and of course preached and painted up.

"The more you elevate your mind," says Sir George, "the more you will be likely to succeed;" and both diary and letters teem with evidence how diligently and delicately his friend strove to excite Wilkie to make it



the grand business of his leisure hours to remedy the obvious deficiencies of his general education. When he reached London—when he produced his picture of 1806—he was a very illiterate young man: far more so than is at all usual with Scotchmen of rank inferior to his. He had hardly had any schooling—the majority of his equals in the north do not enter life without having spent two or three years at an university. He could not mingle in the society of the Beaumonts, Mulgraves, and Lansdownes, without being made painfully aware of the unfurnished condition of his mind. Sir George encouraged and advised him. Wilkie under his direction read not many books, but the few and good, carefully.\* The progress he made in acquisition is shown by his letters. At first confined to the most commonplace topics, and treating them with stiff, jejune poverty, they by degrees exhibit fluency of expression answerable to expanding thought, and long before the close may often be cited as masterly vehicles of refined observation and profound reflection.

Neither society nor reading, however, interfered with Wilkie's diligence in the practice of his art. Within another twelve months he finished that charming little piece, *The Sunday Morning*, for Lord Mulgrave; five portraits (all of personal friends); and one of his greatest works, *The Blind Fiddler*, for Sir G. Beaumont. The engravings of the Fiddler have been so multiplied, and Waagen's skilful eulogy is so well known, that it would be idle to quote Mr. Cunningham's long analysis of the composition: but we must, in justification of some preceding remarks, extract the paragraph in which he, *more suo*, contrives, without risking any direct assertion, to convey the impression that Wilkie was unhandsomely dealt with by the Academy, in reference to the Exhibition of 1807, when his canvass was again hailed by the public as the prime ornament of their walls. The biographer says:—

“Now those who imagine that the Royal Academy is wholly composed of high-minded men of genius, who are not only generous by nature and free from envy, but proclaimed ‘Esquires’ by letters patent, are really gentlemen one and all, can know but little of human nature, and less of bodies corpo-

rate. The fame of Wilkie, which was almost on every lip, was not heard, *it is said*, without a leaven of bad feeling on the part of some of the members whose genius ought to have raised them above such meanness, and whose works, being in a far different line of art, were fairly out of the embittering influence of rivalry. We know not how this was of our own knowledge, but we know that in arranging the pictures on the walls of the exhibition-rooms, an envious academician can make one fine picture injure the effect of another, by a startling opposition of colour, while a generous academician can place the whole so as to avoid this cross-fire of colours, and maintain the harmony which we look for in galleries of art. When the doors of the Exhibition were opened in 1807, while painters, as usual, complained, some of pictures being hung in an unsuitable place, and others of works placed in injurious lights, the public were not slow in observing that *The Blind Fiddler*, with its staid and modest colour, was flung into eclipse by the unmitigated splendour of a neighbouring picture, hung *for that purpose* beside it, *as some averred*, and painted into its overpowering brightness, *others more bitterly said*, in the *varnishing* time which belongs to academicians between the day when the pictures are sent in, and that on which the Exhibition opens. There must be some mistake, *we trust*, in this; the arrangement, of which we know complaints were openly made, *must* have been accidental, for *who can believe* that a studied attempt could be made to push back into darkness a youthful spirit struggling into light, or that an able artist could not but know that he might as well try to keep the sun from rising as a genius such as Wilkie's from shining? *If such a thing occurred*, Wilkie was amply avenged in the praises of his picture,” &c. &c.—vol. i. pp. 143, 144.

We might safely leave Mr. Cunningham's confutation to himself—to this very passage—and to the acknowledged facts that however placed and neighboured, the *Blind Fiddler* proved the chief attraction—was more looked at by visitors of every class than any other picture in that Exhibition, more carefully studied by the connoisseurs, more loudly praised by learned and unlearned. But when we are invited, however sily, to believe that it is quite in the nature of the Royal Academy, as “a corporate body,” to allow of its leading officers carrying out a

\* On Beaumont's suggestion, a *Don Quixotte* was usually near Wilkie's easel—to be taken up whenever the spirit fainted or the hand flagged.



conspiracy for the purpose of injuring a rising artist, not yet of the corporation, by so hanging his picture as to deprive it of its natural chances of success as a part of the annual show—we are in fact called upon to believe the ruling powers not only knaves but fools. And in a case like the present the absurdity is doubly glaring. Before the picture was sent in, it was known to have been painted for and approved by Sir George Beaumont—one of the most munificent as well as enlightened patrons of art then living, a man whose influence over the leading members of the Academy was very great—whose slightest complaint of their proceedings would perhaps have been more dreaded at Somerset House than the sternest censure of all the dukes and marquesses in England put together. But waiving all this, unless the “Hanging Committee” were selected, from a body of men skilled in art, for the express purpose of doing discredit to their body, the procedure which Cunningham ascribes to them was an impossibility. Even if they had hung the *Blind Fiddler* at such a height on the wall that its merits could not be discovered by the naked eye, curiosity would have been excited by the article in the catalogue announcing a second piece by the painter of the *Village Politicians*, and magnifying glasses would have been put into requisition. But Mr. Cunningham does not even venture to hint that it was placed inconveniently high. He merely insinuates that it was designedly hung beside some other performance, the colouring of which made it look colder than it otherwise would have done. The colouring! As if the *Blind Fiddler* was a furniture picture, valued and considered with reference to the general arrangement and contrast of tints and shadows on a pannel or a wall. Whoever pays any attention to such a work begins with isolating it. It demands and commands minute scrutiny—the deliberate study which admits of no interference or interruption from a blazing daub hung beside the canvass, any more than from the gilding of its own frame, or the red or green paper of the saloon.

At the same time, we admit there are pictures which may be damaged by such juxtaposition as Cunningham hints at—pictures of the class that must be looked at from a distance: and we certainly have always inclined to the opinion that the Royal Academicians would act wisely in abandoning the custom which Cunningham mentions, of al-

lowing members of the body an exclusive privilege of working on their pictures after the Hanging Committee have completed their arrangements. As long as that system is adhered to, there will be eternal allegations of practical unfairness; and no temporary advantage to individual performances can counterbalance the continued thwarting of general opinion, which we think has been for some time sufficiently pronounced as to this point of detail.

With respect to Allan Cunningham’s general sneer at the Academy on this occasion, we shall dismiss it by quoting from his own next page part of a memorandum in which the able artist Andrew Wilson, who had then just returned from a first visit to Italy, describes the reception of the *Blind Fiddler*:—

“The *Blind Fiddler* excited great admiration in the Exhibition; it was regarded as a vast improvement even upon *The Village Politicians*, and one of the most perfect works of the kind ever produced by any British artist. His great youth and his extraordinary merit induced several eminent persons, lovers and patrons of art, to consider the best means of encouraging a painter of such wonderful promise. I was a frequent visiter of the gallery of Mr. West, President of the Royal Academy, and by accident was present one day when several nobleman and gentlemen met, seemingly for the purpose of consulting West on the subject. One of them, I remember, observed, that perhaps it might not be prudent to give Wilkie too many commissions at once, as he would probably exert himself beyond his strength: besides, a young man wrought better from hope sometimes than from certainty. To this remark the President replied, ‘Never in my whole experience have I met with a young artist like Wilkie: he may be young in years, but he is old in the experience of his art: he is already a great artist:—therefore do not hesitate in offering commissions and all the encouragement in your power. I have the most perfect confidence in his steadiness, as well as in his abilities. I consider him an honour to his country.’”

About Wilkie himself, whom Mr. Wilson met frequently and familiarly at this time, the Memorandum supplies a trait well worthy of notice:—

“When any thing was said that Wilkie did not clearly understand, he did not hesitate to stop the conversation till it was explained: this to me seemed odd, especially as some of

the explanations required were about simple matters in art. Most young men I then thought would have scrupled to appear ignorant; but I have since seen enough to set down this practice of his as a proof of superior understanding."

In keeping with this is Cunningham's statement that Wilkie continued, after these pictures had established his name, as regular as ever in his attendance on the lectures at the Academy, especially those of Flaxman, and in drawing with the students both from the cast and the living model. He also attended Charles Bell's course of anatomy, and his intercourse with that ingenious and amiable man did more, we believe, to open and improve his mind generally than any other connexion he ever formed, except that with Sir G. Beaumont. He thoroughly imbibed Bell's views as to the "Anatomy of Expression;" and was indebted to him for innumerable happy suggestions in the course of his subsequent performances. It might, we have often thought, have been, on the whole, a fortunate thing for Bell himself, if he had turned at this time to art as the main business of his life. There can be no doubt at least that, if he had done so, he must have attained the highest rank as a painter. His sketches indicate talent of the richest sort, both for design and colouring. And his natural temperament was obviously that of an artist; the stuff was not stern enough for the department to which he adhered.

While the Exhibition of 1807 was still open, Wilkie obeyed the dictates of affection and revisited his parents. When he left town he had, he says, orders for no fewer than *forty* pictures; yet, working so laboriously as he did, he had as yet gained hardly more than was sufficient for a frugal maintenance. Whatever surplus he at any time found, appears to have been expended in little presents to the good people at the Manse of Culter. Mr. Cunningham's account of his reception there now is very pleasing—we give its opening sentences, which are beautiful:—

"May had not well begun when Wilkie was on his way to Scotland. He had a twofold joy to taste of the purest and sweetest kind; he had to meet his father and his mother with fame on his brow, and to visit the friends of his native place, to bestow rather than receive honour. Genius is seldom so happy; before it has risen to distinction almost all who loved it in youth, or hoped its

ascent, or desired to rejoice in its joy, have passed to the dark and narrow house, and left its welcome to a colder generation. Wilkie was more fortunate; and the few weeks he spent at this time in Scotland he called the happiest of his life."

On his return Wilkie removed to a better lodging, and resumed his usual industrious course of life. His diary begins shortly after this: no doubt it contains much that may be useful to students in art; but to the general reader it is about as dull a diary as ever was produced. We shall give a fair specimen by and by. He presently furnished, besides some more portraits, and two minor pieces (the *Clubbists*, and the *New Coat*), his *Alfred in the Neatherd's Cottage*, and the *Rent Day*—the *Alfred* a subject not well adapted for his hand, demanding a dignity of feeling which he never could reach—the other, in every respect one of his most sterling works.

To pass over for the present some other pictures, in November, 1809, he was elected an associate of the Academy. Hereupon says Mr. Cunningham:—

"One would suppose that genius alone, and those proofs of genius—works of a high order—were all that was necessary. *Far be it from me to say* that such is not sufficient; but members *might be named*, who won their election more through a fortunate legacy than their fine limning, and who were indebted more to the charms of their wine than their works for their admission among the *Forty*."

We should like to know why all this is introduced *here*, since Mr. Cunningham proceeds to favour us with the important information that "to give dinners to those accustomed to the splendour of titled men's tables" was "a flight beyond the means of Wilkie:" that he dreamt of no such nonsense; and was nevertheless voted an Associate almost immediately on reaching "the academic age." Nor are any of our difficulties removed by the next paragraph:—

"It is not uninteresting to trace the progress of Wilkie towards this distinction. His punctual attendance as a student had been observed by many of the academicians: the amenity of his manners had even touched the fierce Fuseli and the surly Northcote; while the vigour and variety of his genius—acknowledged by the mob—had at last exacted approbation from the Academy, a body ever afraid of giving undue influence to

young merit by early praise."—vol. i. p. 252, 253.

When the next Exhibition approached, Wilkie sent in a small picture, which was called at first the *Old Man with the Child's Cap*, then *No Fool like an Old Fool*, and finally, the *Wardrobe Ransacked*. The committee advised him to withdraw this weak and fantastical thing—and he complied with their advice. The picture was, Mr. Cunningham says, much improved afterwards—he admits that at best it can only rank with Wilkie's minor efforts. But the exhibition of that year had nothing from Wilkie; and—though, in October, 1811, Wilkie, not yet 26 years of age, within five years after he first sent anything to Somerset House, was elected unanimously a Royal Academician—Mr. Cunningham cannot account for the advice to keep back the *Old Man in the Child's Cap*, otherwise than by attributing jealous and hostile feelings to the committee of April, 1810. He tells us that Bird had "created a sensation" by one or two pieces somewhat in the Wilkie style—that not a few of the Academicians, themselves addicted to the "high historic" vein, were "it was supposed," delighted with the prospect of seeing Wilkie supplanted by this new rival: one of them "is said" to have prophesied the speedy downfall of the "long thin Scotchman, as proud as Lucifer and as cold as granite;" and in feelings such as these originated the implied rejection of the *Old Man and the Cap*. We should surmise that, if there had been any unfriendly feeling towards Wilkie in the committee (whose opinion of the *Old Man*, Cunningham himself hardly ventures to dissent from,) it would have dictated the admission of the new picture, not the counsel to withhold it. But our friend himself states a small fact which entirely demolishes the whole of his story, or rather theory. He tells us that Mr. Phillips, one of the most accomplished and influential Members of the Academy, called on Wilkie and advised him to acquiesce in the hint of the committee at once—avoid by all means any step that might disparage the authority of the body, "for," said he, "you will very soon be one of us yourself." So much for the coldness of Somerset House. As to Bird, he was one of the Sam Slicks who make a lucky hit, and are then found to have exhausted themselves. That Wilkie himself ever felt any uneasiness at Bird's transitory success—far less that it made him suffer in

point of physical health—is what we do not feel ourselves called on to think credible, notwithstanding all Mr. Cunningham's shrewd guesses and delicate suppositions—for he does not produce one syllable of evidence on the subject one way or another.

On the election as R. A., Mr. Cunningham has another magniloquent paragraph:—

"Wilkie, who had looked up to the Royal Academy with something of the reverence of a son, obeyed all its rules, listened to all its maxims, treasured up its counsels in his heart, practised them in his life, believed that its members rivalled the prime ones of the earth, and that *the chair of the president outshone the thrones of Ormuz or of Ind*, received this intimation with a sober joy peculiar to himself. Not so the lovers of art: they rejoiced aloud to see this admission of fresh life's-blood into the Academy, and that so great a favourite, and one so worthy, had been elected while he was yet vigorous and young."

One would suppose that Landseer, Leslie, Eastlake, Grant, Stanfield, Maclise, Roberts, had all been venerable old fellows before the Academy adopted them!—The biographer adds, however, with truth and propriety:—

"To the Academy Wilkie brought fame, acquired by works reflecting as in a mirror the manners, customs, and feelings of the people of Britain, in the invention of which neither party nor history could claim a share; the domestic character of the land was again in the hands of a consummate dramatist—the only one who had appeared since the days of Hogarth."—vol. i. p. 331.

To get over at once this anti-academical story, we omitted some labours of 1808 and 1809. In that period Wilkie painted a portrait of the Marchioness of Lansdowne; his *Sick Lady*, or the *Only Daughter*—a delicately finished picture, and showing great tenderness:\* his *Jew's Harp* and his *Cut Finger*—both so well known, that we will not criticise them. From his diary, while the latter was in hand, we may take our sample:—

"November 1st, A little girl sat for the hands and feet of the boy; the painting of which occupied me till twelve.—2d, Began

\* In this piece a cloth is hung over the singing-bird's cage, as if the mother had feared even that favourite note might disturb her suffering girl. Compare this with the cobwebs over the poor-box and the crack across the Commandments in Hogarth's picture of the *Rake's Wedding*.



to paint from nature the girl looking over the old woman's shoulder, and then began on the cap of the taller girl.—4th, Began to work at ten, and continued till four, and put in the dress of the girl looking over the old woman's shoulder.—5th, Had a letter from my sister Helen, telling much that I loved to hear from my native Cults. Altered the gown of the old woman in the Cut Finger; put into my picture the apron, and a piece of white drapery on the knee of the old woman.—6th, Walked to Camden Town: Haydon came to breakfast; we went to church together, and heard a good sermon from Sydney Smith. Had a call from Lord Mulgrave. Took a look at the Elgin marbles.—7th, I began to alter the effect of the sketch of the Cut Finger; painted in part of the petticoat of the old woman.—8th, Painted from ten till four; put in the blue handkerchief of the tallest girl, the ribands of her cap, and touched the petticoat of the old woman.—10th, Went to the Academy: the only thing I painted at home to-day was the pinafore of the boy, which I am not sure but I must rub out.—11th, Rubbed out to-day what I had done yesterday to the pinafore, and painted it in again of a bright yellow colour, which, with the dark coloured trousers, improved the look of the picture greatly.—12th, Haydon came to breakfast; approved of the boy's clothes, but objected to the blue apron of the old woman, on account of its being too cold for that part of the picture. When he was gone I finished the cap of the old woman, and put in the cat at her feet.—13th, Seguier called: he liked the Cut Finger, as far as it goes, better than any thing I have done.—14th, Altered the boy's pinafore, as Seguier had suggested, from a strong to a pale yellow."

There are two or three hundred pages of this sort of thing: but Mr. Cunningham makes no apology—so we presume there must be more in them than we are qualified to understand.

"23d, Began to paint after breakfast, and continued till four; during the time I finished the part under the table at the window, and glazed the purple petticoat of the tallest girl, and painted the fire.—24th, Went over the wall behind the old woman's head, for the purpose of working it; I also put in a small looking-glass in the wall to bring her hand out from the back-ground.—25th, Did a little more to the white-washed wall, and put in some little articles about the fireside.—26th,

Haydon came to breakfast; when he was gone I began to paint, but first sent out the girl of the house to buy a fowl, which was plucked for me to paint from; put in the fowl, with the oil bottle on the white wall.

"December 1st, Put in the tongs and poker at the side of the fire. I happened to try to-day a little white colour which had grown fat by standing, and found it to work in a rich and very easy manner.—2d, The only thing I did to-day was the chair in the corner of my picture. Haydon approved of the pewter basin very much.—5th, Painted from ten till four, and put into my little picture the small ship on the chair, and finished the floor and the small pieces of wood upon it.—7th, Began to paint at ten, and continued till four, interrupted only by a call from Seguier. Put in the flower-pot in the window of my picture, with the shining of the sun on wall."—Vol. i. pp. 203–212.

One extract more—"Douce David" is puzzled for once:—

"26th, A young lady called, and made use of the name of one of my friends to see my pictures. She expressed in strong terms her regret at not finding any picture of mine in the Exhibition, and said she had seen a print of me, but it looked much too youthful. Though she said nothing at all improper, I am inclined to doubt her character, as well as her motive for calling on me. It is altogether a strange matter."—Vol. i. p. 298.

Such was Wilkie's laborious life. Now and then a dinner at Lansdowne House, with Lord Mulgrave at the Admiralty, Sir G. Beaumont, or some other patron; the like at West's, Beechey's, or Dr. Baillie's: all the rest is made up of the regular routine—work in the studio during five or six hours every morning—drawing at the Academy in the evening: a most exemplary diligence. By degrees we have glimpses of accumulation—stock is bought;—a keen eye is kept on the money market—*pawky* friends in the city are consulted—no opportunity of turning a trifle by a well-timed transaction on a small scale is neglected. But one rule appears never to have been infringed. From the opening to the closing page of this journal, there occurs no hint of his touching his brush on a Sunday. Whenever Mr. Sydney Smith was in London, Wilkie appears to have made one of his congregation: a preference which, in this anxious student of human nature, it is not difficult to understand.

In 1810 he painted the Gamekeeper for Sir G. Beaumont: in 1811 the Rat-hunters, his diploma picture for the Academy—and the Village Festival for Mr. Angerstein: in 1813 he exhibited the Bagpiper (Sir F. Free-ling's), and another of his greatest efforts, the Blindman's Buff, for the Prince Regent (500 guineas): in 1814 came Duncan Gray; the Pedlar (for Dr. Baillie); and the excellent Letter of Introduction—a reminiscence of 1805: in 1815 his memorable Distraining for Rent, purchased by the directors of the British Institution (600 guineas): in 1816 the Rabbit on the Wall: in 1817 the Broken Jar: the Sheepwashing, for Sir Thomas Baring; and the Breakfast (400 guineas), for the Marquis of Stafford; in 1818 the Errand Boy—and the slight picture of Sir Walter Scott and his family, in which we never could see much to admire, except the likeness of Sir Adam Ferguson: in 1819 the Death of Sir Philip Sidney (another failure)—the China Menders—the Whiskey Still (both good in their style)—and a true *chef-d'œuvre*, the Penny Wedding, for King George IV. (500 guineas): 1820, the Veteran Highlander—the Bacchanals (another abortive attempt)—and that truly splendid work, the Reading of the Will. This happy subject was suggested by Bannister the actor, and it was purchased by the King of Bavaria for 400 guineas: a recognition of spreading fame which must have given Wilkie high delight. In 1821, came the Athole Highlander—the Newsmongers—and the capital Guess my Name. In 1822, the perhaps most elaborate and finished of all his works, the Chelsea Pensioners reading the Gazette of Waterloo, for which he received the sum of 1200 guineas from the Duke of Wellington: in 1823 we had, besides some minor things, the Parish Beadle—another masterpiece: in 1824 the Sportsman (for General Phipps)—the Cottage Toilette (for the Duke of Bedford)—and Sir Robert Peel's very clever picture of the Smugglers: in 1825, the Highland Family, for the late Lord Essex (350 guineas.)

It seems proper to give a specimen of the style in which Mr. Cunningham describes these works. We select a genial paragraph or two on the Village Festival:—

“The Alehouse Door—or, as it has since been called, the Village Festival—exhibits England in her most joyous mood: tippling brown ale of her own brewing, and making merry under the shadow of broad-leaved elms

of her own planting. Her sons, under the influence of the spigot and faucet, bid the holiday hours fly past, till quiet glee bursts into noisy humour; and her daughters, touched with mirth, and perhaps with liquor, take part in the scene, only to watch till their mates begin to fall from sociality into sottishness, that they may move them home by gentle force and good-humoured persuasion. There are none of the moody groups here which give gloom to the pictures of the Dutch painters. Wilkie has no men who argue with knives and dirks; nor women who scold and scratch faces. The place where this festivity occurs has a country look, remote from spruce towns and regular cities; the inn with balconies and doorways seems once to have sheltered a race a step or two higher into gentility than its present occupants; fruit trees are here and there on the walls, and the elms have been allowed to grow unlopped to the girth and stature of trees. It seems a summer day, when men and women, before harvest begins, have leisure for fun; on the cool side of the inn seats of all kinds, but especially settles and benches, are placed, as if at random, rather than regularly, and there, gathered into knots and groups, are all the drinking and noisy spirits of the district, waited on by three ministers of joy, a jolly landlord, a bustling landlady, and an attractive handmaid. The ale circulates in black bottles, in shining pewter, or in burnished flagons, till some sit because they cannot stand, and others lie because they cannot sit.

“On one side of the picture, right against the alehouse door, from the step which the landlady casts her eye over the whole scene of her profit, are seated four very drouthy customers, to whom the landlord stands decanting a bottle of his best, inducing the ale, by his art in pouring, to foam over the crystal into which it is descending; it flows almost audibly, speaking more of the malt than of the Thames. A negro is listening to the sound with a face which all but reddens through its tan with enjoyment. The second or central group is composed of a man who

“Is na fou, but just has plenty,”

and who has been most reluctantly persuaded by his wife and daughter to leave the first group while he has feet to carry him: the descent of the strong ale from the landlord's bottle sparkles in his eye; the remonstrances of his friends, who are adding force to entreaty, sound like music in his ear, yet still

his feet move homeward: such is the happy influence of wife and weans. His very dog is a lover of propriety, and joins against those who seek to detain him; while even his tippling associates seem, from their awkward and mirthsome manner of pulling at him, to be scarcely in earnest, and to think that his quiet and modest housedame is in the right. Partly behind this central group are three or four rustics, who acknowledge the double charm of the housemaid and her ale, and detain her, not reluctantly on her part, to listen to such palaver as rises uppermost (like froth) when drink prevails. The landlady sees all this as if she saw it not; and says, or seems to say, like a Nance Tinnoch of the north on a similar occasion, 'Sic things maun be, if we sell yill.' The group at the other end of the picture is of darker and more painful meaning: a rustic, too tipsy either to walk or stand, has fallen down between the hog's trough and the sink, while his children, evidently motherless, gather around, and regard him with great sorrow. There are auxiliary groups at door, and window, and balcony, laughing over the humour or the beauty of a scene which words are not light enough to describe in its glow of colour; or the skill of the graver equal to the task of transferring, with true effect, its full character to copper."—vol. i. pp. 300–302.

Into the spirit and composition of such pieces as this—the pieces on which Wilkie's true fame rests—Allan Cunningham enters *con amore*; and making allowance for the false finery of occasional phrases, and the wearisome recurrence of northern illustrations when southern characters and manners are alone in hand, he often produces pages not unworthy of his theme.\* We are obliged to say that we cannot always recognise similar merit in Mr. Cunningham's remarks and reflections on the incidents of Wilkie's personal life during the period to which the works above enumerated belong. The incidents themselves are few and unimportant:—when we have them from his own diary they are placed soberly and unaffectedly before us:—Mr. Cunningham too often interferes in the attitude, as it were, of a trumpeter at the booth of a raree-show. The merest trifle

\* We beg to refer to an article on "Art and Artists in England," in vol. lxii. of this Review (p. 142), for Waagen's general estimate of Wilkie's early and original style. It is a masterly and generous piece of criticism.

must be exalted: feelings totally alien from Wilkie's sedate nature and sagacious common-sense views of the world, and his own business and position in it, are introduced like the "purple patches" of some heavy novelist; and the ignorance betrayed of the society that Wilkie habitually moved in after his fame was ripe, is only equalled by the innocent ease of its manifestation.

Wilkie in his earlier days of celebrity makes an excursion into Devonshire, in company with his friend Mr. Haydon, to visit that artist's family and enjoy some of the finest scenery in the island. Among other objects of interest were of course the birth-place of Reynolds, and the specimens of his juvenile talent still preserved in that neighbourhood. Hereupon we are treated with a profusion of romance, which Mr. Cunningham himself, after he has trimmed his mellifluous sentences, cannot help feeling to be out of place, and in fact confesses to be so—*e. g.*:—

"Devout Catholics go on pilgrimage to the shrine of a favourite saint. The battle-field where empires have been lost and won is visited centuries after by the enthusiastic soldier; the poet goes to the banks of the Avon or *the Ayr*, and thinks, when he touches the birth-places of our most inspired bards, he is walking on holy ground: nor is a painter of any warmth of soul at rest till he has, in a like manner, visited Plympton, in Devonshire, where Sir Joshua Reynolds, *the apostle of his art*, was born. Stimulated, perhaps, by Haydon, as well as warmed by his own *temperate enthusiasm* about Sir Joshua and his genius, Wilkie began his pilgrimage to *the Devonshire shrine* on Thursday the 22d day of June."—vol. i. p. 239.

"Escorted by Haydon, Wilkie visited the wooded scenes on the banks of the river Plym, rode to the top of Mount Edgecombe to see the sun set, and was *almost persuaded* by his companion to sit up all night to behold a Devonshire day break and a cloudless sun arise."—p. 241.

"On the 7th July, after having bathed in the sea, he went with Haydon to Plympton, and visited the house, then occupied by Haydon's schoolmaster, in which Sir Joshua was born: he was shown, he says, the room in which Sir Joshua first saw light, and the school-room where he was educated. As Wilkie was a man of no affectation, he felt himself inwardly cheered, but exhibited no rapture."—p. 240.



No road-book was ever drier than the corresponding pages of the painter's Diary. It is obvious enough, we think, that the enthusiasm and the rapture throughout this tour were not Wilkie's, but Haydon's—a man of high aims and high talents—with warm and glowing feelings as remote from the temperament, as his career in a worldly view has been from the success, of his early comrade.

Another autumn Wilkie spends a fortnight at Southampton, where the late Lord Lansdowne had fitted up some apartments in the ancient castle, and, being fond of yachting, usually resided in them at the season of the year most suitable for that healthful diversion—one in which most *modern* English noblemen of large fortune now and then indulge themselves. That a “high and puissant prince, in possession of palaces and parks, should choose to put up with the accommodations of a marine lodging, even for a month at the fall of the leaf, appears to our friend Cunningham something so eccentric as almost to warrant an insinuation of mental obliquity.—How little did he know of the feelings that great lords have for great houses, and the charm the grandest of them find in being emancipated for a while from the burden of Morning Post pomposity!\* Wilkie sleeps at the inn, but paints in the mornings at the castle, and almost uniformly dines and spends the evening there.

“It will be remembered that the late Marquis shared in some of the fine taste of his half-brother, the present Lord Lansdowne; nor can it be forgotten that he was odd, *though* stately, in his manners—that he deserted the beautiful Bowood, fitted up a whimsical residence in the old crumbling castle of Southampton, and maintained a sort of eccentric elegance, in which he imagined that he revived the splendour of the old Saxon and Danish sea kings, who had dwelt there of old. There was much in this to please *the politest fancy*; the walls of the castle were washed by the tide; the windows looked upon that fine sheet of water which lies so calm between the coast of Hampshire and the beautiful Isle of Wight; and when the Marquis, in a moonlight evening, spread the sail of his splendid yacht, and with his lady and train moved into the bosom of the bay, he had not

much to do to imagine himself an earl in the train of Rollo or of Hastings. *Be that as it may*, he wished to have a portrait of his lady; and to afford Wilkie full time, he was invited to the hospitalities of the castle of Southampton. Wilkie's visit and his doings there are recorded by his own pen.”

Yes; and his own pen drops no hint about either oddity, or stateliness, or eccentricity, or splendour, or “train,” or Rollo:—but merely records day after day such “sayings and doings” as these—

“*2d Sept.*—Dressed at six, and went to the Castle to dinner, where I met a Mr. Stewart, a Scotchman: went with Lord Lansdowne and family to the play, and saw Mr. and Mrs. Charles Kemble in a very pleasing little piece, which amused us greatly.”

“*4th.*—Chalon called, and went with me to the Castle; we afterwards crossed the ferry; met a gentleman, who told us of a great victory gained over the French by Sir A. Wellesley; walked to Netley Abbey, a noble ruin. Returned at four to the inn, and found an invitation to dine at the Castle; went at six, and saw the lord and lady arrive from a pleasure sail; dined, and remained late, allured by music.”

“*6th.*—Had a walk in the morning along the beach; then went to the Castle, prepared my materials, and sent up to her ladyship requesting her attendance: she came at once, and was so kind as to sit for three hours, in which time I went completely over the face and made it better. After dinner went to the drawing-room, and had an account from her ladyship of all she had seen in Paris: we began drawing sketches and caricatures of the young ladies.”

“*12th.*—The marchioness, when I came back, sat for an hour, and I put in the hand holding the cup; and after she was gone I painted the velvet gown, which I all but finished by five o'clock. A violent storm of thunder and lightning and rain came on in the evening while we were in the drawing-room.”

“*14th.*—Went to the Castle—prepared my colours and went up stairs to paint the window with its stained glass. Having done this, I began to pack up my painting matters for departure, and contrived, with a carpenter's help, to secure the wet picture from the touch of its case. Showed Lord Lansdowne the picture, who told me he would pay me after the first of January on his return.”—p. 195.

\* We have heard that one of the Dukes of Bedford used to say he was never so happy, on awaking in a morning, as when the first thing he saw was a dimity curtain—for then he was sure he was not at Woburn.

And what is Cunningham's own *envoy* for this portion of Wilkie's diary?

"The conduct of the eccentric lord of Southampton Castle seems not at all eccentric in these modest records of the great artist: the noble lord and his lady lived, it is true, in a romantic place; but, save in having forsaken Bowood, and *displayed their banner* in this old worm-eaten *hold*, their way of life seems to have been polite and hospitable—nay, elegant."—vol. i. p. 196.

"Polite and hospitable—nay, elegant!" Had Mr. Cunningham really anticipated that he should find Lord and Lady Lansdowne described as "*displaying their banner*" for any other purpose but to signify that they were "*at home*" in their "*worm-eaten hold*"—sending Chalon and Wilkie to dine with the "*train*" as a couple of skalds might have been in the fortalice of a Norse Pirate, and sitting down by themselves to a banquet of porpoise and mead?

Wilkie revisited his native place in 1812, and then, himself in a feeble state of health, saw for the last time his father, who was fast breaking, and died in the course of the following winter. Upon this, he invited his mother and only sister to come up and share his home; and they did so. He took a house in Philimore-place, Kensington—and his headquarters were ever after in that immediate vicinity. Genuine homely kindness, some touches of even romantic tenderness of association, may be seen in his letters at this time to Miss Wilkie (who to the last took charge of all his domestic arrangements); and they lose none of their effect from being intermixed with evidences of the rising, but not yet wealthy artist's considerate thriftiness.

"You know it has been long my wish to take a house in London or its neighbourhood, and that I have been chiefly prevented doing so by the want of furniture; and as my mother may now be able to provide me with that, there will no longer be any difficulty. And another requisite that I am (perhaps fortunately) not yet supplied with—a person to take care of my house—will also be amply supplied by my mother herself.

"I know you will regret selling many things; but I do not think there will be any great loss, as the same money will nearly purchase as good ones here. Of the kitchen furniture I do not know that you should bring any except the old brass pan for making jelly, and anything else you may consider of value. There is an old Dutch press in one of the

closets that my mother got from Mrs. Birrell; what state is that in? If it were not an article of great weight, might not that be brought?

"I do not know that there is a Scotch church near this, but there is a chapel close by, that Mrs. Patterson, an old acquaintance and cousin of my father's, goes to. I think if my mother were accustomed to the Church of England service, she would like it very much.

"I wish every thing of the smaller articles to be brought that looks like a curiosity. The pictures, such as the two I got premiums for, may be taken off the frames, and rolled up together; any thing else that seems curious you may bring, but the old drawings that I made at Graham's Academy I really think it might be as well to burn. My father's manuscripts you may bring with you, and any old china you may have would certainly be of use. The old lay figure I would rather like you to bring."

This letter is indeed a true *Wilkie*—a more curiously accurate picture was never drawn even by his *pencil*. We venture to suggest a *Manse-fitting* as a good subject for some painter of the Scotch school now so flourishing. The old brass pan should not be forgotten.

The removal did not take place for some months: and another letter in the interim, May 1813, describes what occurred at the "grand Commemoration Dinner of the late Sir Joshua Reynolds." Here we have Wilkie's first personal interview with the Regent: and nothing could have been more princely than his Royal Highness's reception of him:—

"When we were in the Exhibition room before the dinner began, his Royal Highness, much to my surprise, came up and spoke to me. He told me he was delighted with the picture I had painted for him [*Blind-man's Buff*], and wished me to paint, at leisure, a companion picture of the same size. I of course bowed, and said I was highly sensible of the honour. The Marquis of Stafford, who was with him, then said that I had promised to paint him a picture for several years, but had never done it, and he was afraid he should never get a picture from me; when his Royal Highness said, by way of apology that his Lordship should consider I had been very long ill; and added, turning to me, that he would be very glad to have another picture from me after I had satisfied the Marquis of Stafford. You may believe it is very grati-

fyng to me to find the Prince so much pleased with the picture."

Wilkie, like most other men, took advantage of the great change in the spring of 1814, and in company with Haydon made a rapid visit to the Louvre. The journal, however, does not tempt us. *That* continental excursion does not seem to have had any considerable influence on his art.

The closing chapters of volume first show little variation from his usual routine. In 1817 he again was in Scotland; now at last a prophet honoured in his own country. Among other places he visited Abbotsford, and Scott's friend, William Laidlaw, acted as his cicerone from thence through the classical valleys of Ettrick and Yarrow. Mr. Laidlaw communicates his account of the invasion of "the Shepherd" at Altrive:

"We found my old friend Hogg at home, and exulting not a little from a flattering letter he had received from Blackwood, to whom he had sent his *Chaldee Manuscript*. The cottage which Hogg at that time inhabited had been the *but* and *ben* of the former tenant, and he dwelt in the kitchen, for it was the preferable part; but the kitchen was large and roomy, and better lighted than such abodes used to be then, and was moreover wonderfully clean. The kettle was hanging over a cheerful peat-fire, and soon began to simmer; and James, then a bachelor, dispatched a shepherdess to borrow some loaf-bread, to which she added some kneaded cake. I felt pleased at the comfort *the poet*, as he was commonly called, had around him; and having several times accompanied Wilkie among the cottages of Gattonside and Darnick in search of the picturesque, I began to point out what I thought might amuse him while Hogg busied himself preparing breakfast. The poet on this began to look and listen: I had not introduced Wilkie as an artist; and it is probable he had taken him, as he did a great poet,\* for a horse-couper: he however turned suddenly to me, exclaiming, "Laidlaw! this is no' the great Mr. Wilkie?" "It's just the great Mr. Wilkie, Hogg," I replied. "Mr. Wilkie," exclaimed the Shepherd, seizing him by the hand, "I cannot tell how

\* Mr. Laidlaw alludes to the laughable story of Mr. Wordsworth's early visit at Altrive. Some days after, the Shepherd, being asked what he thought of his guest, said he seemed a very intelligent man—"for a horse-couper." He had taken the author of "The Excursion" for a certain Tattersall of Edinburgh, his namesake.

proud I am to see you in my house, and how glad I am to see you are so young a man." I was delighted with the natural readiness and fine compliment of my friend, and pleased with the breakfast, which was now ready. We had, I remember, *rizzart* trouts—yellow fins, as Hogg used to call them—from the Yarrow, and a fry of parrs, from Douglas burn, the most delicious of all fish, thousands of which Hogg and I in our youthful days had caught together in the mountain burn, almost the native stream of both. After breakfast we visited together the tower of Dryhope, had a beautiful view of St. Mary's Loch and "those hills whence classic Yarrow flows," and returned to Abbotsford. When I told Scott of Hogg's reception of Wilkie, 'The fellow!' said he, 'it was the finest compliment ever paid to man!'—vol. i. p. 486.

There is only one passage in the book that opens the least glimpse of the tender passion. One of Mr. Cunningham's many contributors of shreds of reminiscence, Mrs. Thomson, among other little circumstances about the year 1821, says:—

"Wilkie had his moments of anxiety, almost of despondency, as many artists have. He worked slowly—so slow, that he used to say he would never become, through the rapidity of his work, a rich man. I think he regretted this the more, as certainly he had at that time a decided partiality—to call it by no warmer name—for a young and beautiful friend of mine; her character was of the same quiet turn as his own. She never suspected his strong interest in her; and as at that time the difference in station was great, he thought it insurmountable. One evening, after dining with us, he accompanied us to a little dancing party, where he and I chose to look on. On a sudden, he said to me, as the young lady moved before us, 'I think her head and throat the most perfect I ever saw: they are matchless!' As we had not been speaking for some time, I said, 'You don't mean her: yet I guess whom you mean—why not try your fortune?' 'Oh!' he answered, 'she would never think of an artist—I would not—I would not presume.' I thought he was right, and made no reply."—vol. ii. p. 55.

Allan Cunningham's commentary is rich:

"Though I regard ladies as first-rate judges in all matters of the heart, it is, I fear doubtful whether painters, when they exhibit any rapturous emotion in the presence of



beauty, regard 'the matchless head and throat' as matters professional or matrimonial. While the painter may be meditating on a Madonna or a Nymph, his rapt looks may be set down as an affair of the heart, when it is only one of the eye; and the fair one before him may expect an open declaration, when the artist is but imagining the lustre her charms will give to canvas, and how glowing she would look in colours akin to those of Murillo or Titian."

The first of English painters in such terrible awe at the idea of asking the daughter of some—knight and alderman perhaps—to sit for her picture! Charms! and canvas! He could not—he would not presume! She would never think of an artist! For what?—to make her matchless throat glow in colours like Murillo's!

If he was to be in love, he had done well to fix his fancy on a fair one of "a quiet turn." According to an Academy story (for the literal exactness of which we do not vouch), the following dialogue once occurred between Mr. Stewart Newton, R. A. (a pleasant voluble Yankee), and this serious brother, as they walked home from a dinner party:—

"Newton.—Well, we have had a pleasant evening, Wilkie.

Wilkie.—Raily.

Newton.—But you were very silent.

Wilkie.—Raily?

Newton.—In fact, you said but one word.

Wilkie.—Raily?

Newton.—There it goes again!—Why, Dawvid, you never do say any thing but raily!

Wilkie.—Raily!"

We have already carried down the catalogue of his works to 1825—a remarkable epoch in his life—and the remaining years of that period need not now detain us. He twice again visited Scotland—once when George IV. was there in 1822, upon which occasion he was commissioned to paint two portraits of his Majesty in the highland dress, and the scene of his reception at the palaces of Holyrood. These pieces were not, however, carried beyond the sketch stage, until much later. The large portrait is a splendid piece of colouring—such as Wilkie could not have produced until after his travels in Spain; but it cannot be classed, as a portrait, with the master-works of that branch of art; for Wilkie could not combine rivalry of his then idol Velasquez, in the massing of lights and shadows, with the Spaniard's

noble simplicity and fidelity in the preservation of the individual image. Nor can we admire much the Holyrood Reception, except as to its *chiaro scuro*. The sentiment of the real scene was at once elevating and pathetic. Wilkie, from feebleness, caricatures both his elements of interest: as in a paralytic patient the smile becomes a broad laugh, and a kind word draws tears. Next to the king, whom (though his bearing was manly and kingly) Wilkie makes to strut like a decorated drum-major, the most prominent figure was the premier peer of the northern realm, who presented the keys as hereditary keeper of Holyrood—the Duke of Hamilton—himself, after the descendants of Mary Stuart, next heir of the royal blood of Scotland—but, if it were only as the male representative of the Douglasses, ranking certainly behind no magnate or grandee in Europe for the distinctions of an historical ancestry. It would have been well for Wilkie had he never meddled with pictures of this class, but since he was to paint the Reception of August, 1822, his Grace's title to the second place in it was just as indubitable as the King's to the first. Mr. Cunningham, however, thinks fit to intimate a different opinion; and he sneers at the duke as "exhibiting the blazonry of a pedigree which had little to boast of save a long descent." (vol. ii. p. 120.) One might have expected some little acquaintance with Scotch history in a writer who has hardly a sentence without a Scotticism: and it might also have been expected that a Scotchman who spent the best years of his life in Chantrey's studio, would show some respect for the only Scotch noblemen of these days at all distinguished as a patron of the arts. But not so—no occasion must be missed for betraying our good friend's anti-aristocratical prejudice.\*

\* A few years later, the Duke of Hamilton presided at a public dinner given in honour of David Wilkie; and in what a different style does he then speak, in a Scottish assembly, of their premier duke—

"Who, in his own person, represents the noblesse of three great kingdoms—the generous chivalry of France, the baronial aristocracy of England, and the chieftains and thanes of our own ancient kingdom: the first of our peers, the first of our cognoscenti, and in his palace possessing the first gallery of art our country can boast of; whose family is, from their taste, dear to the Scottish artist, as the family of the Medici is to the Italian; and whose ancestors are dear to the poet and historian, as well as to the painter, for the distinguished part they

In 1823, on the death of Sir Henry Raeburn—a portrait painter inferior in nothing to any of his day except Lawrence, and in some of the higher requisites superior even to him—Wilkie was appointed to the ancient office of “Limner” in the establishment of the royal household for Scotland; the salary, we believe, not more than 150*l.*; but the compliment graciously conferred, and even the salary at an aftertime of real consequence.

With 1824 we turn to a darker chapter. In the midst of a career of hourly expanding brightness, distresses great and manifold began to gather about him. His aged mother, to whom he was tenderly attached, died under his roof. Two brothers also died: he had been security for one of these who held an appointment under the Ordnance, and it was found that a considerable deficit must be made good by the artist. Though Wilkie had received what may seem large prices for some of his pictures, and was a careful man all along, what proved ultimately the chief source of his emolument had as yet barely opened. The engravings of but a few of his best pictures had been completed—nor could anything but experience teach even him the best methods of turning the publication of prints to account. A painter at starting that way is like a young author, who must usually submit to many sacrifices before he can hope to be initiated in the mysteries of dealing. Wilkie had just begun to understand his position as a pictorial *author*, and entered on a variety of engagements which, had there been no break in the general prosperity of the publishing trade, must, in a few years, have rendered him a wealthy son of art. He saw at last that, by preferring to the line of portraiture as his regular profession, the indulgence of his natural genius in another style, he had not necessarily embarked in a career quite so unluccrative as might have at first seemed. The portrait-painter is well paid for his picture, and can finish many pictures in the year: but when this is done, he may in general balance his books, and know exactly what the labour of a year has produced for his purse. It is only in rare cases, such as we need not point out, that he has any chance of gaining much from engraving. It is very different with the creator of a Blind Fiddler

or a Waterloo Gazette. The sum he receives for his finished canvas, however liberal, would be but a very moderate recompense for the long months of toil it has cost him. It is from the multiplication of the design that his real gain is to be accomplished. At first his great anxiety is to be popularly known—he has not capital to justify risk—he accepts whatever a print-publisher offers for a copy-right, rather than have his production confined to the knowledge of those who can see it in his own handwriting on the walls of some noble gallery. By and by he perceives to what the chances amount, and insists on an adequate participation in the profits of the imprint. David Wilkie, in the sequel, brought to bear on all this business a very uncommon shrewdness and dexterity.

The year 1825 found him in the midst of many arrangements of this nature. No one needs to be reminded of the disasters that befel our commerce, especially our publishing traffickers of every class, in the course of that and the following year. Wilkie, already shaken by domestic grief and pecuniary loss, could not stand up against the accumulating waves of disappointment and danger that now rolled towards him. His early experience of poverty had never been forgotten: it is in that alone we find the apology for various not agreeable traits in him throughout middle life—indications of a degree of smallness and *canniness* which, under other circumstances, must have been considered as pitiable enough.\* The prospect of renewing acquaintance with the old enemy was now too much for Wilkie. His nervous system yielded: he had some slight symptoms of paralysis in his hands and feet: and when these disappeared, which they did slowly, there could be no doubt that the malady had reached the brain itself, and the consequences of this proved much more lasting.

Satisfied, after some months of painful suspense, that it was in vain for him to think of resuming the practice of his art, Wilkie wisely followed the advice of his physicians to try what might be done for him by a total

\* On one occasion Wilkie receives intelligence from his brother that a picture has been sold—well sold—during his absence from Kensington. He answers that he is delighted with the bargain—but begs his brother to observe, that if nothing was said expressly about the frame, the picture need not be sent home in the gilt frame the purchaser had seen—a plain wooden rim would do! Eheu!

have taken, side by side with royalty, in the romantic history of our country.”—vol. ii. p. 388.

change of scene and habits, in the course of a protracted tour on the continent, in company with a young relation, a student of medicine. In coming to this resolution he was greatly supported by the appointment of Royal Limner for Scotland; but that was not his only support from the same quarter. Mr. Cunningham, without directly impeaching the kindness of George IV., finds means to insinuate that his majesty's conduct to Wilkie on this occasion was any thing but royal. A parliamentary grant—another pension (the Limnership was one)—or a munificent donation at least from the privy purse—these were, Mr. C. thinks, the obvious resources: Parliament made no grant, and the King gave neither donation nor second pension:—

"The nation is not easily stirred in the cause of the genius which adorns it: the sovereign, though pensions abounded in the land, and he was a generous and open-hearted prince, thought of no better way than a proffer of money to support him when ill, to be repaid in pictures when he grew better. This was refused by the painter with much meekness of heart."—vol. ii. p. 406.

We do not know whether the phrase "meekness of heart" is an ironical one—but the book tells the whole of this story inaccurately. In the first place, we have the statement just quoted under date of March, 1827, as if the king's interference had occurred long after Wilkie left England—was in fact delayed until there were symptoms of restoration in his case. Had this been so, there would have been nothing to complain of; the natural inference must still have been that his majesty came forward as soon as he was given to understand that Wilkie might stand in need of pecuniary advances. But we are satisfied that the erroneous date would have been set to rights had Mr. Cunningham revised his MS.; for it is hardly possible that he should have been ignorant of that important particular. When the king was informed, which he was in the summer of 1825, that Wilkie's physicians apprehended him to be labouring under a paralytic affection, which did not indeed obscure the rational faculties, but made it impossible for him to exert his mind on any serious subject for more than a very short interval, his majesty sent his private secretary, Sir W. Knighton (himself a physician of eminence, and much attached to Wilkie,) to convey to him the regret with which he had received such

intelligence, and his anxiety that no thought about the two or three pictures for the royal gallery left unfinished, or about any thing else in the shape of business or money, should be allowed to disturb him in the arrangements judged most advisable with a view to his health. As we heard Sir William Knighton himself tell the story—the king said to him, "Go to Wilkie—he is proud and shy—he may not want money at all, and it would not do to offer him that: say to him, however, that on your report I entertain a confident expectation of his recovery by-and-by, and have no fear on that score—if he will but consent to be idle for the period recommended by his medical men. Tell him I am so sure of this, that he has my permission to consider me as his banker—so long as he continues to travel, and *does not work*. He may draw for what he wants, and repay me when he comes back, at his leisure, in the shape of pictures. I can never have too many Wilkies in my collection." Sir William added, that nothing could surpass Wilkie's gratitude—he felt the generosity not more than the delicacy of the king's whole proceeding. He had no occasion to accept money at that moment—nor afterwards. Travelling at a very moderate expense, the limner salary and the interest of some small deposit secured in the three per cents. supplied all that was necessary for his purposes until the commercial storm subsided—some of his pictures were rescued from the insolvent publishers—and in various ways light began to dawn again on his pecuniary affairs;—at which time, and in consequence mainly, we doubt not, of the mental relief thus afforded, his health again underwent a favourable change, and he once more applied his hand to the pencil. But most undoubtedly, all through his illness and his travels, he received internal comfort from the knowledge of the feeling that existed towards him in the breast of his sovereign. We happened to meet Sir William Knighton at Wilkie's house a few days after he returned to England, and can never forget the display of his emotions on that occasion; for it was indeed so remarkable in a man of his usually reserved demeanour, that Sir William on our leaving the house together, told the whole story, we believe simply to do away with what might have been a natural apprehension as to the completeness of the painter's mental restoration. We can only account for Allan Cunningham's omissions and mis-



representations on this subject by the melancholy recollection that that worthy man himself had sustained a paralytic seizure some time before he put together these Memoirs; which fact is of course the too sufficient apology for many other imperfections.

The details of Wilkie's grievous malady, and the numberless medical experiments he submitted to, may have interest for students of pathology; but we shall not trespass on such pages. There is enough of present evil and sorrow always in the world, without lingering needlessly over dreary records of past suffering.

During nearly two years, though his personal appearance was little affected, he remained incapable of the continued exertion of any mental faculty; yet, as we always said, there is no symptom of any faculty having been even temporarily enfeebled in its essence. For many months he could not look at pictures with any capacity for judging them, during more than ten or fifteen minutes at a time; nor could he write to a friend, or make entries in his diary, for a longer time, without feeling himself exhausted, bewildered, compelled to pause: but both letters and diaries show that, while actually examining works of art, he kept entire possession of his powers, and he records his impressions, however slowly and painfully, in language rarely obscure, often beautifully expressive of clear perceptions and sagacious criticism. To follow the workings of a mind so entire and vigorous, and see them overshadowed ever and anon by so dismal an eclipse from failure of stamina in some part of the physical machinery, is one of the most touching lessons in the book of man.

He staid some weeks at Paris, (August, 1825,) and then proceeded into Italy. He visited all the chief towns and galleries there, and spent several months of two successive winters in Rome; the intervening summer having been given to a perambulation of the most celebrated of the German baths, which he tried with no more benefit than he did alternate courses of low diet and high diet, moxa and mercury. No doubt the frequent locomotion did him good: we question if any thing else did so, except the pleasurable excitement he had from viewing famous works of art—the great attention he experienced from his countrymen and from enlightened foreigners everywhere—and latterly, and most especially, from the better news that reached him about the fate of particular pictures and engravings, and publishing firms

with which he had connected himself in the commerce of the burin. One piece of intelligence gave him naturally great delight. When the late King of Bavaria died, the Reading of the Will, being a piece of personal property, was to be disposed of by auction; the new King bought it in at the price of 1200*l.*, three times what his father had paid Wilkie. His absence extending to three years, of course his news from England could not but have now and then been of a less cheering tendency:—

“Condemned to Hope's delusive mine  
As on we toil from day to day,  
By sudden blast or slow decline  
Our social comforts drop away.”

He heard, while at Rome, of the death of his best friend, Sir G. Beaumont. This blow the invalid felt acutely. He had accepted a present of 100*l.* from Sir George at parting; and now he received a bequest to the same amount.

We must make room for a few specimens of Wilkie's Italian criticism—selecting passages that appear to deserve special consideration with reference to what was either done or not done by himself in the sequel of his career; but even as to this most interesting series referring every student to the details of the book;—and reluctantly passing over entirely a world of remarks, intrinsically as valuable, as to other matters in the wide domain of art.

From Rome he writes in January, 1826:—

“The masters who preceded the time of Da Vinci, whom our friend Northcote used to speak of with such respect, attracted my attention at Pisa and at Florence; and to those who have seen art in its declension, it is interesting to observe the qualities which distinguish it in its infancy and its manhood. The works of Cimabue and Giotto, humble almost as those of the Chinese and Hindoos, had yet the living principle of expression and of thought, which, down to the time of Masaccio, furnished their only means of arresting the sympathies of man. The refinements of fore-shortening, of contrast, and of intricate composition, with which the followers of the Caracci have so incumbered art, were to them impossible. In sentiment alone they excel. To this they appear to owe their advancement, and to this even the mighty men who brought art to maturity appear to owe their pre-eminence.

“The great works of Raphael and Michael Angelo in Rome, (my chief study,) evince this in a high degree. No artist can either

be so high or so humble in his aim as not to be benefited by their contemplation. The divine Raphael indeed, though shorn by time of his original freshness, *all* can understand, and *all* would wish to imitate. With M. Angelo it is different: his works, incapable of being repaired or refreshed, present with their high reputation a great enigma to most people. Dulled with smoke and natural decay, the admired contour and relief, the great inspiring cause of grandeur and of deep thought, which Raphael imitated, and which drew forth the dying eulogium of Reynolds, is lost entirely to the common eye; and it is only by making allowance for these that the artist can see their great qualities, and, combined with them, what I least expected to see, a refined light, shadow, and colour."

This is a very remarkable passage; but there are many others in which he expresses the same sense of the pre-eminence of sentiment over every thing in the style of execution, especially the artifice of colour.

In the subsequent extracts we have *underlined* some sentences not less noticeable as to colouring *per se*. Observe, especially, how he feels the effect of broad, fearless handling, and remember with wonder the evident marks of painful touching and re-touching in Wilkie's later works.

At Parma in April, 1826, he says:—

"I have this morning been perched up in a pigeon-hole on the cupola of Correggio, perhaps the most beautiful work I have ever yet witnessed. Around the top of the dome is a garland of angels, in forms and combinations the most elegant, and in expression the most fascinating to be conceived—luxurious and brilliant even amidst the decay of the material. This is the most original of all the works I have seen of this great master. And here, I observe, hot shadows prevail, and not cold, as some with us would have it; this he has to a fault, making parts of his figures look like red-chalk drawings; but the sunny and dazzling effect of the whole may be attributed perhaps to this artifice. This, though painted to be seen from the body of the church, is, except for general effect, lost unless seen near. Besides frescoes in various other churches, the public gallery has five pictures by Correggio, of which three are of quality sufficient to form each the attraction of any collection; but the famous St. Jerome (or the Day) takes the lead: this, for force, richness, beauty, and expression, makes every thing give way. *Hundreds of copies have been made; but all*

*poor compared with the fearless glazings, the impasted bituminous shadows of this picture.* Yet who that could paint like this would venture to exhibit at Somerset House!!!"

At Venice, May 1st, 1826:—

"I have seen the Assumption of the Virgin, by Titian: with this, even had I not been told it was his master-piece, I should have felt disappointed. This is a severely damaged picture: it has, on the face of it, evidence of a complete scouring; indeed its history says so. It, however, neither wants in tone nor force. It is tremendously powerful—scarcely any thing could stand by it; but the colours are too much cut out, too unbroken and artificial, giving to the whole a coarseness unlike others of this great master. The Peter-Martyr appears his best-considered and most successful work: this, in its place, looks duller than it did in Paris. Oil pictures in churches suffer from lights coming in front of them, and this, besides, is much sunk in; but it is a work of great power. And here, if this be the standard, what a scale of colours! The whites are yellow, the blue sky is a green, and the green trees the deepest brown. I have seen Ostade often on this scale; and if successful effect constitutes authority, how practically terrible is the tone of this work,—but how removed from the practice of modern times! The Miracle of St. Mark is the great favourite with the artists; and for richness and depth of tone nothing could more effectually correct the errors now going than this master-piece of Tintoretto. *But this is mere technicality, the workshop of art; cleverness in the highest degree, but without sense or sentiment, and to all but the artist incomprehensible.*

"May 2d.—On seeing the Assumption a second time it improves: besides being a strong, it is also an impressive picture. The great Crucifixion of Tintoretto I have also seen: far more sketchy than I expected, being vigorous and *clever in the extreme—the Taking of Seringapatam in Venetian art; but if this is what English artists are to follow, then farewell to our influence on the public mind. Titian seems here lost, and alone in addressing himself to the thinking part of our nature; and I never felt more strongly the justness of the estimate Sir Joshua makes of Venetian art, as compared with the other schools of Italy. The rest seem merely ornamental painters.*"

At Genoa, (May, 1827,) he says of the Correggio in the Palazzo F. Spinola:—

*"Simplicity of tint and of colour prevails; no staining or mottled varieties: the flesh, both in light and shadow, is produced by one mixed-up tint, so melted that no mark of the brush is seen. There is here no scratching or scrumbling—no repetitions; all seems prepared at once for the glaze, which, simple as the painting is, gives to it with fearless hand the richness and glow of Correggio. All imitations of this master are complicated, compared to this; and how complicated and abstruse does it make all attempts of the present day to give similar effects in colouring! Here is one figure in outline, upon the prepared board, with even the finger-marks in colour of the painter himself. Here is the preparation of the figures painted up at once, and, strange to say, with solid and even sunny colours."*

Again, in August, he writes thus to Mr. Collins—

*"With us, as you know, every young exhibitor with pink, white, and blue, thinks himself a colourist like Titian; than whom perhaps no painter is more misrepresented or misunderstood. I saw myself at Florence his famous Venus upon an easel, with Kirk-up and Wallis by me. This picture, so often copied, and every copy a fresh mistake, is, what I expected it to be, deep yet brilliant; indescribable in its hues, yet simple beyond example in its execution and its colouring. Its flesh, (O how our friends at home would stare!) is a simple, sober, mixed-up tint, and apparently, like your skies, completed while wet. No scratchings, no hatchings, no scrumbling nor repetitions—no ultramarine, lakes nor vermilions—not even a mark of the brush visible; all seemed melted in the fat and glowing mass, solid yet transparent, giving the nearest approach to life that the painter's art has ever yet reached."*

*"This picture is, perhaps, defective in its arrangement; but in its painting quite admirable. Now, can nothing like this ever be done again? Is such toning really not to be reproduced? I wish to believe the talent exists, and am sure the material exists. But we have now got another system; our criterion of judging is changed: we prefer a something else, or, what is still more blinding, there is a something else we mistake for it."*

We have not room for more;—some of the most striking passages in the Diary bear a

German date, and record his now profound veneration for Rembrandt—a worship in which he continued steadfast to the end.

At Rome, about the opening of 1827, Wilkie began again to use his pencil—at first only for a few minutes at a time. His journal, Presbyterian as he was, never exhibits any disdain for the religion of Italy—on the contrary, he acknowledges that it seemed to have a deeper hold on the people than that of Protestantism has any where in our northern atmosphere in these later days—and evidently regards even its grosser superstitions with the leniency of one who had seen the cities, like Ulysses, of many men, and *knew their manners*. His new attempts all bespeak an artistic, but more than an artistic sympathy, with the devotional rites and feelings of the region he was in. These were the Confessional—the Pifferari Playing Hymns to the Madonna—the Cardinals and Priests and Roman Citizens washing the Pilgrims' feet; and a sketch, from which he afterwards finished a picture, of a Roman Princess washing the feet of a Pilgrim. In all these we see the influence of Wilkie's recent study of Rembrandt, combined with that of the Italians, especially of Correggio. They were greatly admired at Rome—and well might they be so, considering what painting had long sunk to in Italy. Wilkie sold some of them on the spot; and the grave calm letter in which he tells his brother that he hopes he shall henceforth be more likely to remit than to draw on home, is (from him) the natural expression of the deepest pleasure.

He retired, when the hot season approached, to Switzerland, and at Geneva again painted a little, with much approbation of that critical community. From thence he proceeded to the south-west of France, and at length found himself on crossing the Bidasoa in a new world: a sensation which he says he had only thrice in his life, the other two occasions being when he first touched the continent at Dieppe in 1814, and again when in 1840 he landed from the Danube steam-boat in a village of the Moslem. He was now in Spain, "the game-preserve of art in Europe:"—the first English artist that had visited the territory since the conclusion of the war.

We shall quote one fragment of his Spanish diary:—

*"Madrid, Oct. 1827.—Saw again to-day the Spanish school in the Museum,—Velasquez a surprising fellow! The Hermits in a Rocky Desert pleased me much; also a*



Dark Wood at Nightfall. He is *Teniers on a large scale*: his handling is of the most sparkling kind, owing much of its dazzling effect to the flatness of the ground it is placed upon. The picture of Children in Grotesque Dresses, in his painting-room, is a surprising piece of handling. Still he would gain, and indeed does gain, when he glazes his pictures. He makes no use of his ground; lights and shadows are opaque. Chilliness and blackness are sometimes the result; and often a cold blue or green prevails, requiring all his brilliancy of touch and truth of effect to make tolerable. Velasquez, however, may be said to be the origin of what is now doing in England. His feeling they have caught almost without seeing his works; which here seem to anticipate Reynolds, Romney, Raeburn, Jackson, and even Sir Thomas Lawrence. *Perhaps there is this difference: he does at once, what we do by repeated and repeated touches.*"—vol. ii. pp. 486, 487.

Wilkie's letters and journals throughout all these travels show a mind occupied exclusively with his own health, his own worldly affairs, his art: no wonder that this should have been so; but the exclusion of all other topics, and the repetition of whatever occurs as to these over and over again, often the very same words being used in the diary and then to three or four correspondents, give a heavy monotony to many chapters—which might have assumed a very different aspect if the painter had carried with him a little more of general curiosity, or even if his biographer had selected judiciously from the materials here presented in a crude mass.

While in Spain, Wilkie was so fortunate as to make several trips in company with Mr. Washington Irving, (then attached to the American legation at Madrid,) and with Lord Mahon; and he owed, no doubt, to the former the suggestion of his Columbus, and to both much instruction and guidance in the direction of his researches: yet his papers barely name them. It does not seem to have occurred to Allan Cunningham to apply to either of them for reminiscences. We have heard both tell some amusing anecdotes of Wilkie in Spain. Mr. Irving, in particular, used to have a rich story about his appearance *en Turc* at a masked ball in Madrid, when he forgot his part on entering the room, and made his salaams with his turban under his arm like an opera-hat. But such awkwardnesses were always quite in his line. Another friend of ours was once on a visit

with him for some days at a great house not far from London. One day some neighbouring gentlemen were invited to dine, and entered the reception-room with gloves and hats in hand. Sir David started off in great confusion, and presently reappeared from his bed-room with hat and gloves.

Art is not all extinct in Spain. If they produce nothing worthy of their old frame in painting, they engrave admirably—perhaps better even at this moment than anywhere else, for the rage for small cheap multiplications by steel-plates has not reached the Peninsula. When Wilkie set up his easel and produced *The Spanish Mother*, he created a powerful sensation at Madrid. It was a most happy imitation of Velasquez, as respects arrangement of colour. They admired greatly also his sketches illustrative of the war of Independence. Their recent history had inspired no native artist of any mark whatever in any department: the exquisite cleverness of all he did was apparent—and they could not know how far all his dexterity was from reaching what he had achieved in earlier days, when obeying the natural impulse of his genius on its own soil.

Wilkie, however, had now fixed his aim to rival the broad effects of the great Italians and Spaniards, Rembrandt, and our own Sir Joshua: he had laid aside the microscopic delicacy of his earlier detail, and, amidst the applauses of a foreign community, reflected with satisfaction on the superior facility with which, in case his new style were equally approved of at home, he should now be able to meet the demand for his productions. He anticipated that henceforth he should find it quite easy to paint half a dozen pieces in the time that one had been used to cost him: and this was very true. But he had not foreseen that, however initiated enthusiasts might delight in the fruits of his maturer mastery of colour and *chiaro scuro*—however eager wealthy Englishmen might be to have such pictures as he was now meditating on the walls of their galleries—there was a very slender chance of their arresting the general sympathy like those, however comparatively cold and poor in tone and tint, which bodied forth in permanent shapes the fleeting, evanescent indications of national and domestic character, temperament, emotion, *sentiment*—what his eye required no light but the light from heaven to read, and his hand little teaching to translate and fix with a felicity which, if ever equalled, (and we doubt that it ever was,) had certainly never been surpassed.

Failing such revival of the old universal eagerness, he must henceforth bid adieu to the prospect of large gains from engravings; but on this he did not calculate at Madrid. And though Wilkie was slow in making up his mind on any important subject, his adherence to the view that he had once fairly adopted and taken home was quite as strong a feature.

He returned to Kensington in the autumn of 1828; and the sketches and pictures, whether finished or in earlier stages of progress, that he brought with him, amidst unhesitating recognition of a master's hand, were received with any thing but a general feeling in favour of the change of plan and system everywhere apparent. He was sent for immediately by the King, who was delighted—and delighted Wilkie by his ready appreciation of the approaches to the effects of Velasquez. Wilkie's vanity had got into a false strain when he was pleased with this; but he might well be gratified with the extent of the Sovereign's patronage. His Majesty desired that he should send him, or finish for the royal collection, no fewer than six of the fruits of his exile: and they were well paid for. For the Pifferari the King gave 150 guineas; for the Princess washing Pilgrims' feet, 250; for the Spanish Posada, or Guerilla Council, 800; for the Guerilla and his Confessor, 400; for the Guerilla's Return to his Family, 400; for the Maid of Saragossa—in our opinion a pompous piece of imbecility—800:—in all, from the King for these foreign works, 2800 guineas; while he had from Sir William Knighton, for a small Spanish piece 40—for a small Italian one 30—and for the Spanish Mother and Child 200 guineas: 150 from Mr. Morison for the Roman Confessional; the like from Mr. M'Connell for the Infant Sancho Panza: for the large Pilgrim Picture, 300 from Sir Willoughby Gordon; for the Columbus 500 from Mr. Holford; and 300 guineas from Lord Lansdowne, for the best, according to our recollection, of all the Spanish series, the Monks in a Capuchin Convent of Toledo. For the pictures belonging to those travels therefore he received, within about three years—but the far greater part very speedily after his return—the sum of 4620 guineas.

On the death of Sir Thomas Lawrence in January, 1830, there is little doubt that George IV. nominated Wilkie to the vacated post of Painter in Ordinary, in anticipation that the Royal Academy would also elect him their President; and that Wilkie himself

had long ere then fixed his ambition on one day filling that station, we have sufficient evidence in six Lectures on Art, now printed from his MS.—compositions of high merit, obviously elaborated upon the model of Reynolds's presidential addresses. What his hopes now amounted to, we know not; but he had only one vote, and Sir Martin Shee was called to the chair by a very large majority. Mr. Cunningham, as might be expected, is fierce against “the forty” on this occasion. He complains bitterly of the succession going so much in the line of portrait painters. We wonder he did not rather take broader ground, and ask why a painter should always be chosen, never a sculptor. In January, 1830, surely Chantrey might have been thought to deserve this elevation not less than Wilkie. However, the Academy could have found no one whose enlarged and elegant accomplishments would have reflected more honour on their body than it has continued, and we hope will long continue, to receive from the presidency of Sir M. Shee. We do not say Wilkie would have made a bad President; but his illustrious eminence as a painter was only one of many things that his brethren had to consider. He might have been as unfit for the place as Burke would have been to lead the House of Commons. The electors had seen Wilkie in aspects and circumstances remote from our or from Mr. Cunningham's cognizance. The *sine qua non* for such a post lies in the combined possession of eminent learning and taste for the fine arts generally, with skill for the management of sensitive men and delicate business—the temper, the tact, the high feeling, and imperturbable courtesy of a gentleman. It was no light thing to fill adequately, as to all these points, the chair of the gentle and generous Lawrence.

There was one important qualification in which Wilkie would not have been found deficient. The most hide-bound of mortals in talk, he had, we presume with an eye to the chair, taken considerable pains with himself as a speaker. Cunningham says he always prepared himself very carefully when he thought there was a chance of his being called up. We can believe this—but the effect was good. We have heard him acquit himself with laudable point on such occasions. He was not indeed to be compared to Sir Martin—but we think he at least equalled Sir Thomas.

George IV. soon followed to the grave that great artist by whose hand so many of

the ornaments of his Majesty's period in arts and arms are recorded for posterity. But King William continued Wilkie both as limner and as painter in ordinary; and as many royal portraits must of course be executed, for home and abroad, on the accession of a new sovereign, Wilkie was thus suddenly involved, to a very large extent, in a department of practice for which he had no natural liking, and never attained much aptitude. His multiplied pictures of William IV. and Queen Adelaide brought him much money, but no increase of reputation. Nevertheless, the death of Lawrence had left such a vast blank in the realm of portraiture that Wilkie was beset with extra-official demands also of his nature; and as it could hardly happen that a man of his talents should fail always in anything he set himself to, he did now and then produce a portrait of high stamp. Such as those of the Earl of Kellie, the Earl of Tankerville, and Lord Melville. That of the Duke of Sussex, a grand and gorgeous piece of painting, was not ill described at the time as the finest picture that ever was done of—a dog;—a magnificent animal of that species throwing his royal master quite into the shade. His head of the late Lady Lyndhurst is also a rich specimen of colouring, but it can hardly be said to present any resemblance of the beautiful original:—indeed we are not aware that *female beauty* ever was represented by Wilkie, either within or out of the department of portraiture.\* His pictures of the Duke of Wellington and the Duke of York are in much the same unsatisfactory category. It is well that, like Lady Lyndhurst, they had sat to Lawrence.

Among other commissions of this class Wilkie received one, in the height of the reform season, to paint Mr. O'Connell for some admirer named in the Catalogue "the Rev. H. Cholmondeley," whether Anglican or Romanist we are not told. The royal Limner, it seems, hesitated, and would not accept until he had privately consulted with his Magnus Apollo, Knighton. Sir William had too much sense not to point out the absurdity of carrying politics into such matters; and Wilkie produced a full-length which Cunningham extols as an immortal image of the agitator in the attitude of "demanding from Justice, what he could not hope from Mercy, for Ireland." The cloak and other adjuncts

are most skilfully done; in labouring to refine the physiognomy almost all resemblance has escaped. Mr. O'Connell, like many other illustrious people, must be contented with the immortality of "HB." We well remember how uneasy Wilkie was while this picture remained in his studio: he always kept it with the face towards the wall, and could hardly be persuaded to show the progress of his handiwork. It must be allowed he had sufficient reverence for the powers that be. His letters to people of rank and consequence are awfully full of "*booing*;"—and what is melancholy, though common enough, he seems to have been getting worse on this head as he grew older and richer.

The honour of kighthood was conferred on Wilkie by the late King in 1836; and in the same year he removed to his last house, a good and large one, in Vicarage-lane, Kensington. A few summer trips to Scotland, one to Ireland, and occasional visits to patrons in the English counties, are the only other incidents that diversify his career between the return from Spain in 1828, and his departure for the East in 1840. The other noticeable works of his pencil during this period were the Holy-rood picture, finished in 1830, price sixteen hundred guineas—of which perhaps we said enough when recording the commission in 1822: in 1832, The Preaching of Knox, for Sir Robert Peel, (twelve hundred guineas); in 1835, the First Earring, for the Duke of Bedford, (two hundred and sixty); in 1836, the Whiteboy's Cabin (three hundred and fifty)—and Napoleon and Pius VII. at Fontainebleau, for Mr. Marshall of Leeds (six hundred); in 1837, the Cotters' Saturday Night (four hundred)—and the Queen of Scots' escape from Lochleven (six hundred); in 1838, Josephine and the Creole Prophetess (five hundred guineas)—the Bride at her Toilette (four hundred)—Sir David Baird discovering the body of Tippoo Saib, for which Lady Baird gave sixteen hundred guineas—and Queen Victoria Presiding at the Council on her Accession (six hundred); in 1839, the Grace before Meat (four hundred); in 1840, the Irish Whiskey Still for the Duke of Bedford (four hundred guineas);—with two unfortunately not finished pieces, John Knox administering the Sacrament, and The School.

Something was said in this Journal, while Wilkie was yet among us (*Quart. Rev.* vol. lxii. p. 143), on the more prominent performances of these busy years. The fault may be in us—we make no pretension to techni-

\* The like has been said of Hogarth—but there is at least one charming exception—*The Lady's Last Stake*, in the Earl of Charlemont's collection.



cal skill—but we can see in several of them scarcely more than a clever, but servile, and after all not a very successful, imitation of that illustrious master, but most dangerous model, Rembrandt. In these the attempt to work miracles with hardly more than one colour is sometimes very disappointing in its results: the magical richness of Rembrandt's favourite brown is certainly never reached. We like better the pieces in which the imitation, not less obvious, is of Velasquez chiefly. For harmonious breadth of effect, some of the larger of this class (the Columbus especially, the Hatfield Wellington, and the Scene at Fontainebleau) may be hung, without apprehension, beside the noblest canvasses of the Spaniard; leaving therefore at a great distance all other efforts of the English School, except only Sir Joshua. But amidst all this felicity of arrangement and fullness of projection, neither in his large portraits (generally), nor, we think, in any one of his larger historical pictures, does he seem to have at all approached Sir Joshua, or Velasquez, or any other of his higher models, in the treatment of the human face divine—the very point of his marking excellence when he established his own proper fame by humble groups within narrow compass. To the service of this later ambition the original cunning of his hand was not available; he had wandered from the native path of humour—easy genial humour, reaching sometimes pure pathos, hardly ever trespassing beyond the border of satire—but he could make only timid and uncertain steps in any region of elevated sentiment. Profusely as our extracts have shown his feeling for what he could not rival, the streaky profusion of lines in which he takes refuge, so unlike the bold transparent blendings of Sir Joshua, conveys near at hand the painful impression of conscious weakness and anxious toiling, and when seen at a distance (if we must trust our own eyes and not Mr. Cunningham's), conveys no impression at all, but that 'tis pity such meaningless misty heads should float amidst such admirably-toned masses of drapery and scenery.

This unfortunate *streakiness* is apparent even in his later pictures where the figures are on the old scale; but always least apparent where the sentiment and character of the heads come nearest the boundaries of the old department. No great painter ever made less of a fine subject than Wilkie did of the Queen's First Council at Kensington. The pathetic, romantic interest which might have

inspired the coldest alien, could not kindle him—or he could not express his emotions. This is besides a poor composition even as to the *chiaro scuro*. On the other hand, a finer one as to *that* than his Preaching of John Knox, has most rarely been produced anywhere. In the merits of his later style it is foremost; and undoubtedly it has much to remind us of the happiest vigour of his untravelled pencil. His youthful recollections and associations qualified him to enter thoroughly into the energy of the zealot, and the enthusiasm of his disciples: and so far as the main group is concerned, to gaze on it is like rising from the Drumclog and Bothwellbridge Chapters in "Old Mortality." But there the parallel stops. The personages on the other side are melodramatic. It is scarcely worth while to remark on some flagrant anachronisms in the detail.

We can hardly doubt, however, that had Wilkie been spared to us, he must by and by have become alive to the sense of what he could, and what he could not do with the new elements, so to speak, that he had brought within the grasp of his hand. We believe the only very popular and lucrative engraving done from his later works was that of the Knox Preaching. Could he have failed to take such lessons home? What might he not have done, had he devoted himself, with all his acquired command in atmosphere, disposition, and relief, to a series of pictures somewhat, but not very much, elevated in point of subject above his early masterpieces! The Sacrament of Knox is indeed, even in its unfinished state, one of the most precious of all his legacies. That he had begun to have some hankerings after his first ground itself, too is obvious from The School—a composition left still less finished, but of much greater compass and complexity, and full everywhere of life, ease, and strength. This seems to have been the last thing he laboured on before he once more left England.\*

Wilkie's motives for undertaking this expedition are explained by himself in his Journal, and in perhaps a dozen letters now printed; all telling clearly and precisely the same very simple story. But that simple story will not satisfy our amiable biographer: so we have, as usual, a page or two of mysterious hints and wise conjectures, the upshot of which seems to be that Allan Cunningham

\* At the sale of Wilkie's relics last year the Sacrament of Knox brought 84*l.*:—the School 75*6*l.**

guesses him to have been dissatisfied and disappointed somehow or other with his treatment here; and is inclined to believe, on his own part, that Sir David had sufficient reason for thinking himself ill-used by the upper world. Not the slightest shadow of any such feeling can be traced in anything written, or distinctly recorded as said, by Wilkie; if he had entertained any such feeling, he must have been one of the silliest, in place of what he was, one of the most sensible of mankind. Three sovereigns had successively showered their favours upon him;—none of them more liberally than the young queen whose reign had recently commenced, to whom he had been personally known as a Kensington neighbour all her days—who received him, he tells his brother, when first presented as an officer of her household, “as if glad to recognise an old friend”—and whose own taste and talent for the art of the pencil, and lively appreciation of Wilkie’s merits, were not state secrets. Mr. Cunningham’s “words, words, words,” about the neglect of the “sons of genius” in our time, are on a par with his groanings over the “oppression” suffered by “the children of the clouted shoe,” as he Miltonically expresses himself, at the hands of “the aristocracy.” The nobility and political leaders of all parties had struggled against each other, for more than thirty years, to obtain specimens of Sir David’s work—the prices, from a very early period, being left wholly to his own discretion; nor had the cotton-lords been in this, any more than in other departments of costly indulgence, a whit behind the corn-lords. Far above the childish folly of hunting after what is called gaiety, he was well received, as often as suited his leisure and inclination, in highly elegant and intellectual circles of society. And, finally, having been by the accidents of commerce stripped, in 1825, of almost all the hard-won earnings of his youth, the result of his career between his resumption of painting and the autumn of 1840, was, that—living in a handsome house, in which he latterly exercised, we believe, a suitable measure of hospitality—what with the prices of new works, and (far more important) the proceeds that came in steadily, year after year, from engravings of his early domestic pictures, Sir David Wilkie had found means to accumulate a fortune of 30,000*l.* In short, he was now, for a bachelor with his ideas, rich; if he ever had thought of marrying, which we much doubt, such dreams must have been over with a bachelor of his “quiet turn” Ann.

*Ætat.* 55; nor can we think it at all surprising that, with his notions of the stride consequent on his visit to Spain and Italy, he should, now that his independence was secured, have felt disposed, and in every way entitled, to another change of scene, such as might prove not less serviceable to the advancement of his art.

Sir David had received in youth religious impressions which, happily for him, appear never to have been obliterated: his desire was to devote the closing years of his life to paintings illustrative of the sacred history; and it occurred to him, as it might naturally occur to any one who had so well studied men and Englishmen, that if anything could make scriptural paintings popular among us, it would be the investing of them with something of that aspect of actual truth, that regard for the literal reality and matter of fact, which has been found to command our broadest sympathies in arts and in letters—a legitimate manifestation of the pre-eminently practical character of the people. We shall have to quote his letters from Palestine by and by. For the present hear a brother Academician:—

“‘When I went,’ says his friend Collins, ‘to bid Sir David Wilkie farewell, a day or two before he left home for his last journey, I found him in high spirits, enlarging with all his early enthusiasm on the immense advantage he might derive from painting upon holy land, on the very ground on which the event he was to embody had actually occurred. To make a study at Bethlehem from some young female and child seemed to me one great incentive to his journey. I asked him if he had any guide-book: he said ‘Yes, and the very best;’ and then unlocking his travelling-box, he showed me a pocket Bible. I never saw him again; but the Bible throughout Judea was, I am assured, his best and only hand-book.’”—vol. iii. p. 393.

Leaving home in August, 1840, and travelling over old ground to Vienna, he embarked on the Danube, and reached Constantinople early in October. As soon as he had satiated himself with the novelties of architecture, and the outward aspects of Mussulman life, he prepared his easel, and was readily honoured with sittings by the young Sultan for a portrait requested by the Queen of England. While at Stamboul he executed some other portraits on a small scale, and various sketches of what would probably have been very striking pictures, suggested commonly by scenes that met his eye in the



streets or bazaars; but by far the best we take to be chiefly from imagination—the reception of the news of the fall of Acre, before the fleet of the infidels, among the motley company of a Turkish coffee-house. This is an exceedingly clever thing, and it is very well represented in the publication of Mr. Joseph Nash, which indeed forms the liveliest and most interesting *Journal* of these Eastern travels.\*

Wilkie's letters from Constantinople are few. In one of them he adapts his description, with some tact, to his countrymen and kind friend—the zealous upholder of granite and Macadam against wooden-pavement innovation—Sir Peter Laurie:—

“To you this capital would recall in many things, particularly its vast size, London; but in how many things what a contrast! What you, as a civilian, would think indispensable to keep together so large a community, has never been known. The houses are not numbered; the streets have no names, the coaches are very few, many of them dragged by oxen, and can only pass through a few of the streets. There is no post-office; the town is not lighted by night; many of the streets are unpaved, and those that are, so ill, that by the mud with which they are encumbered it is quite an adventure to get along. Sweeping or cleaning the streets is never thought of. . . . So uncouth, unexpected, and strange was every object, in the first week of our arrival, that I could not help exclaiming to my English companions, what Dandie Dinmont said on his first view of Pleydell in the chair of High Jinks, ‘Deil the like o’ this I ever saw.’”

On the 12th of January, 1841, Wilkie embarked for Syria; and in his account of the brief voyage there are two interesting passages:—

“*Smyrna, Jan. 30th.*—Observed about the bureau of the steamer a number of persons of remarkable appearance. These were grave and elderly individuals in robes and long beards, belonging to the scattered remnant of Israel, come from the distant parts of Germany and Poland on their way to the land of their forefathers. This is the first symptom that our journey is more than a mere travelling excursion; but, though made

with a different aim, is yet made with those who, from age, pursuit, and family descent, give to this wayfaring progress the most sacred character. They have but a part of the interest that we have, but have reason to feel it more intensely: they return from a land of strangers to their ancient home; and, like their ancestors, from bondage and captivity, return to the same land of promise which, in happier times, was the possession and portion of the chosen race. We again, who make the same pilgrimage do not attach so much importance to the time and place, except in their power of fixing the attention upon higher objects, yet we cannot help being struck with the feeling of attachment which, under many circumstances of privation, makes so distant a country, and a glory departed, so eager an object of contemplation. The question then is, whether an interest, both with Jew and Gentile, so deep-rooted and so universal, may not be helped by the faculties of art being pressed into the service; and while the pursuits of learning and of war have, in former times, been so familiar with the sacred land, it seems but reasonable that the powers of art should try, from the localities now existing, to revive indeed the impression of those events that have, in so lively a manner, been handed down to us from former ages.

“*Feb. 8th.*—Was called by the mate to come on deck at half-past six o'clock: dressed in haste, and, on mounting the cabin stairs, found the Holy Land in sight, extended right and left, far and wide, with Mount Lebanon and its extended range right ahead.

“On deck all was stir and preparation: various aged persons of the chosen people were decorating themselves with the sacerdotal robes of the sacred office, and though tranquil were yet apparently deeply moved. Some with the Bible in hand, with a black strap twisted round their naked left arm, and with a small ark or tabernacle tied round their brow, were, with an oscillating movement of the head, repeating some appropriate prayers or thanksgiving upon the near accomplishment of the object of their voyage. Their appearance, though they were meanly dressed, was imposing in the extreme.”

On the 26th of February the party travelled from Jaffa to Ramla (Arimathea). On the 27th Wilkie writes to his brother:—

“With hue and cry, and noise, we were all in movement by six o'clock, before sunrise, recalling to me strongly the preparations for the journey we used to make in early

\* “Sir David Wilkie's Sketches in Turkey, Syria, and Egypt: drawn on stone by Joseph Nash.” Imperial folio; London, February, 1843. These engravings, in number twenty-six, are so well coloured that they really all but amount to fac-similes of the originals.



life, to be in time for the tide at Petticur, on our way to Edinburgh."

The diary says—

"We travelled some hours through wide wastes, with some patches of cultivation and village, till we reached the defiles of the hills of Judea, where the close valleys we entered to ascend the highlands were most beautiful, though savage and wild. We were, however, armed; so that the chance of interruption was greatly diminished. In this way we proceeded up hill and down dale, through places verifying the expression in Scripture of a land that was a splendid possession and an inheritance. After stopping at a well, we descended through valleys, when to our surprise, we had to ascend again to a height, which, on reaching, was a kind of table-land, from which we yet saw nothing; and it was not till after we had travelled a minute or two that, on turning a corner, we saw—and, oh, what a sight!—the splendid walled city of Jerusalem. This struck me as unlike all other cities; it recalled the imaginations of Nicolas Poussin—a city not for a day, not for the present, but for all time, as if built for an eternal Sabbath: the buildings, the walls, the gates so strong, and so solid as if made to survive all other cities."

His last and best letter from Jerusalem is to Sir Robert Peel (March 18th):—

"It is a fancy or belief that the art of our time and of our British people may reap some benefit that has induced me to undertake this journey. It is to see, to inquire, and to judge, not whether I can, but whether those who are younger, or with far higher attainments and powers, may not in future be required, in the advance and spread of our knowledge, to refer at once to the localities of Scripture events when the great work is to be essayed of representing Scripture history. Great as the assistance, I might say the inspiration, which the art of painting has derived from the illustrations of Christianity, and great as the talent and genius have been this high walk of art has called into being, yet it is remarkable that none of the great painters to whom the world has hitherto looked for the appearance of Scripture scenes and feelings have ever visited the Holy Land.

"What we therefore so much admire in the great master must be taken from their own idea, or from secondary information. In this, though Paul Veronese, Titian, Giorgione, and Sebastian del Piombo, all Venetians, have by commerce, and immediate intercourse

with the Levant, succeeded in giving in their work a nearer verisimilitude to an Eastern people;\* yet who is there who cannot imagine that such minds as Raphael and Leonardo da Vinci, great as they are, might have derived a help had they dwelt and studied in the same land which Moses and the prophets, the evangelists and apostles, have so powerfully and graphically described, and which they would have described in vain to the conviction of their readers, but as witnesses and participators in the events which forms the subjects of their sacred writings?

"In my journey hither, desirous of taking a review of some of the great works in Germany of Rubens and Rembrandt, I was deeply interested at Munich by the great and meritorious efforts now making by the native painters of that city. These I believe you have seen, and I doubt not with high admiration of the genius of the artists, and munificence of the sovereign who has called them forth. To you, therefore, I speak with deference and under correction; but as they profess to revive a style of art that has formerly existed, whether Byzantine or early Italian, I have doubts if such a style would either suit the disposition of the English painters or awaken the attention of the English public, to whom it would be like bringing forward the Talmud and the fathers of the Church instead of the Pentateuch and the New Testament.

"The time is now come when our supply in this walk of art must be drawn from the fountain head. The facility of travelling, as well as recent public events, favour our pursuits in this sacred quarter; and I am highly grateful at being permitted to see, with my own natural eyes, what Jerusalem in our day can still present to us.

"Here, after centuries of ruin and suffering, Jerusalem exists in her greatness. She is elevated on the high table-land of Judea, two thousand five hundred feet above the level of the sea. Except the Mount of Olives, scarce any hill near rises above her. Her walls, which encompass her on every side, are higher and more superb than any city walls I have ever seen. The square towers of her gates recall those of Windsor Castle;

\* Sir David says again: "The back-ground of the Heliodorus of Raphael is a Syrian building; the figures in the Lazarus of Sebastian del Piombo are a Syrian people; and the indescribable tone of Rembrandt is brought to mind at every turn, whether in the street, the synagogue, or the holy sepulchre."

while their lengthened elevation, with the spires and cupolas they enclose, would have arrested the Poussins and Claudes in preference to all other cities. Her streets are stone-built, massive, surmounted by arches, through which the solemn vista claims the painter's art, though by that art still unknown and unrepresented; and the people, and the Jew, the Arab, and the more humble and destitute, who never change, recall, by their appearance, a period of antiquity in everything removed from the present time."

It is in vain to conjecture, from Wilkie's rapid sketches at Jerusalem and elsewhere, what might have been his success in the great object he contemplated, had his life been prolonged. He has both written and drawn enough to show how deeply his mind and feelings were impressed by the Holy Land; and the sketch of an *Ecce Homo* in its main figure has a divine sadness which, we confess, we should have thought beyond his reach.

We mentioned some time ago, in reviewing Dr. Robinson's "Biblical Researches in Palestine," that Wilkie personally superintended the scientific experiment by which the long-contested problem of the depression of the Dead Sea and the adjoining region far below the level of the Mediterranean was at last solved. He details this interesting day's proceeding in a letter to Professor Buckland.

Proceeding to Alexandria, he, at the pasha's own request, drew his very flattering likeness of Mehemet Ali; and, but for admonitions of internal malady, he would no doubt have ascended the Nile to Cairo and the Pyramids. But this was not to be. He embarked for Malta on the 21st of May, had an access of sharp fever there, and on the 27th resumed his voyage in a very feeble state. The vessel reached the bay of Gibraltar on the 1st of June, but Sir David Wilkie was by that time insensible. A stroke of palsy proved fatal. He expired on board at mid-day, and his remains were the same evening committed to the great deep.

He had reached but the 56th year of his age when he was suddenly cut off in the midst of high and pious aspirations and designs. If anything could console his affectionate relations for such a loss, it must have been the knowledge of the manner in which his last thoughts were occupied. All honours were paid to his memory. The most eminent of our senators, at a moment of hardly surpassed political excitement, came like mourning brothers to take the lead in a pub-

lic meeting, to commemorate his talents and virtue, and concert measures for the erection of a monumental statue in Westminster Abbey.

Great Britain has produced no artist superior to Wilkie. We doubt if Europe has produced so great a painter since Hogarth: and allowing him to be much below Hogarth in boldness and fertility of invention, he has, on the other hand, such a delicacy of sympathy with many of the better parts of human nature, as marks an intellect of happier and, we believe, higher order than ever found its chief gratification in satire. The truth and sobriety of Wilkie's dramatic delineations, in his native style, indicate a masculine breadth of apprehension, a repose of conscious power, a gentle calmness of mind and temper, such as the experience of mankind attests to be the privilege only of pure genius.

We cannot close this paper without again expressing our regret in having been compelled to find fault with many things in Mr. Cunningham's book. We knew him long, and regarded "Honest Allan" with sincere and affectionate respect. But it is a hasty, and in not a few points a rash, compilation. We have already suggested where the true, the sad apology must be found.

One unlucky omission must still be mentioned. He does not print, nor even give any account of, Sir David Wilkie's last will. An Appendix, no doubt, had been designed; but we have a specific reason for noticing the silence of the text. Mr. Cunningham intimates his opinion (vol. iii. p. 357) that there had never existed any cordiality of personal regard between the two greatest artists of our time—Wilkie and Chantrey. They were neither of them at all addicted to sentimental effusion—but the biographer produces not one circumstance in support of his unpleasant suggestion. We often saw them together, and should have drawn a very different conclusion. Never, we must think, was there a man of simpler, more thoroughly manly manners, than Chantrey—one more incapable of carrying hypocrisy into his connexion with his fellows. If he was not a genuine cordial John Bull, we fear we shall never see one. As to Wilkie—in his few letters to the sculptor—few, of course, since they were near neighbours almost all their days, and met each other constantly—the tone is, we should say—for Wilkie—remarkably kind; and there is one fact which, we apprehend, will be considered as settling the whole

affair as respects *him*. Wilkie left Chantrey one of his three executors!

And, by the by, what a rebuke does Chantrey's own will give to all our friend's diatribes against the Royal Academy! Sir Francis, we all know, left a large fortune—he destined it most generously, most nobly, to the service of the fine arts of Great Britain; and, with that great object in view, to what hands did he intrust the management of his munificent bequest? He constituted the President and Council of the Royal Academy his trustees for ever! He did so after thirty years' close observation of the body; and no shrewder observer ever lived.

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From the Foreign Quarterly Review for October.

*Biographie des Contemporains*: ESPARTERO.  
Paris. 1843.

THE military and political events which terminated in the independence of the United States, may be criticised as dilatory, as fortuitous, and as not marked by the stamp of human genius. That revolution produced more good than great men. If the same may be said of the civil wars of Spain, and its parliamentary struggles after freedom, it should be more a subject of congratulation than of reproach. The greatness of revolutionary heroes may imply the smallness of the many; and, all things duly weighed, the supremacy of a Cromwell or a Napoleon is more a slur upon national capabilities than an honour to them. Let us then begin by setting aside the principal accusation of his French foes against General Espartero, that he is of mediocre talent and eminence. The same might have been alleged against Washington.

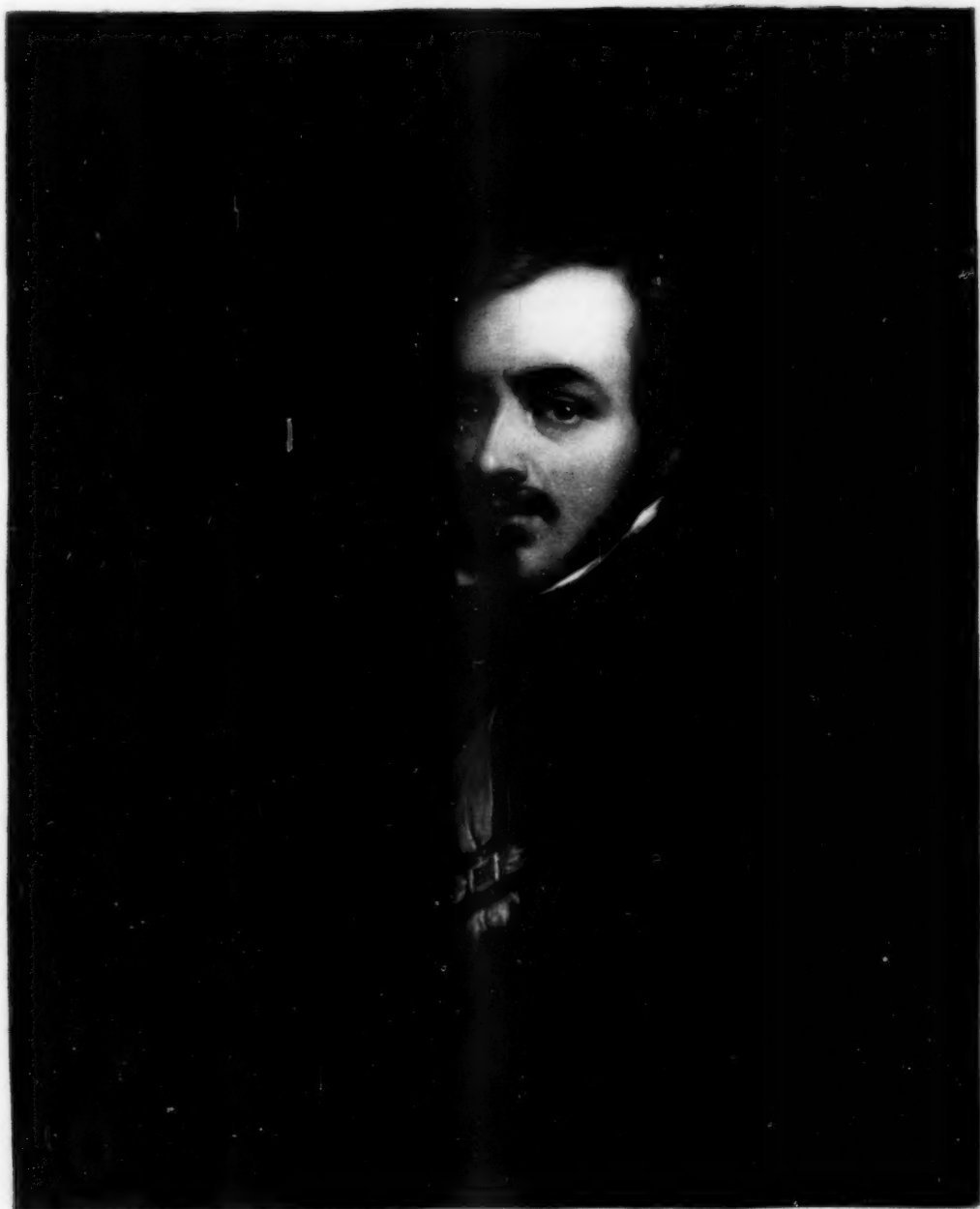
Moreover, there is no people so little inclined to allow, to form, or to idolize superiority, as the Spaniards. They have the jealous sentiment of universal equality, implanted into them as deeply as it is into the French. But to counteract it, the French have a national vanity, which is for ever comparing their own country with others. And hence every character of eminence is dear to them; for though an infringement on individual equality, it exalts them above other nations. The Spaniard, on the contrary, does not deign to enter into the *minutiae* of comparison. His country was, in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, the first in Europe; its nobles the most wealthy, the most magnificent, the most punctilious, the

most truly aristocratic; its citizens the most advanced in arts and manufactures, and commerce and municipal freedom; its soldiers were allowed the first rank, the sailors the same. The Spaniards taught the existence of this, their universal superiority, to their sons; and these again to their offspring, down to the present day. And the Spaniards implicitly believe the tradition of their forefathers, not merely as applied to the past, but as a judgment of the present. They believe themselves to be precisely what their fathers were three hundred years ago. They take not the least count of all that has happened in that period: the revolutions, the changes, the forward strides of other nations, the backward ones of their own. A great man, more or less, is consequently to them of little importance. They are too proud to be vain.

This part of the Spanish character explains not a few of the political events of the countries inhabited by the race. In all those countries, individual eminence is a thing not to be tolerated. It constitutes in itself a crime, and the least pretension to it remains unpardoned. Even Bolivar, notwithstanding his immense claims, and notwithstanding the general admission that nothing but a strong hand could keep the unadhesive materials of Spanish American republics together,—even he was the object of such hatred, suspicion, jealousy, and mistrust, that his life was a martyrdom to himself, and his salutary influence a tyranny to those whom he had liberated.

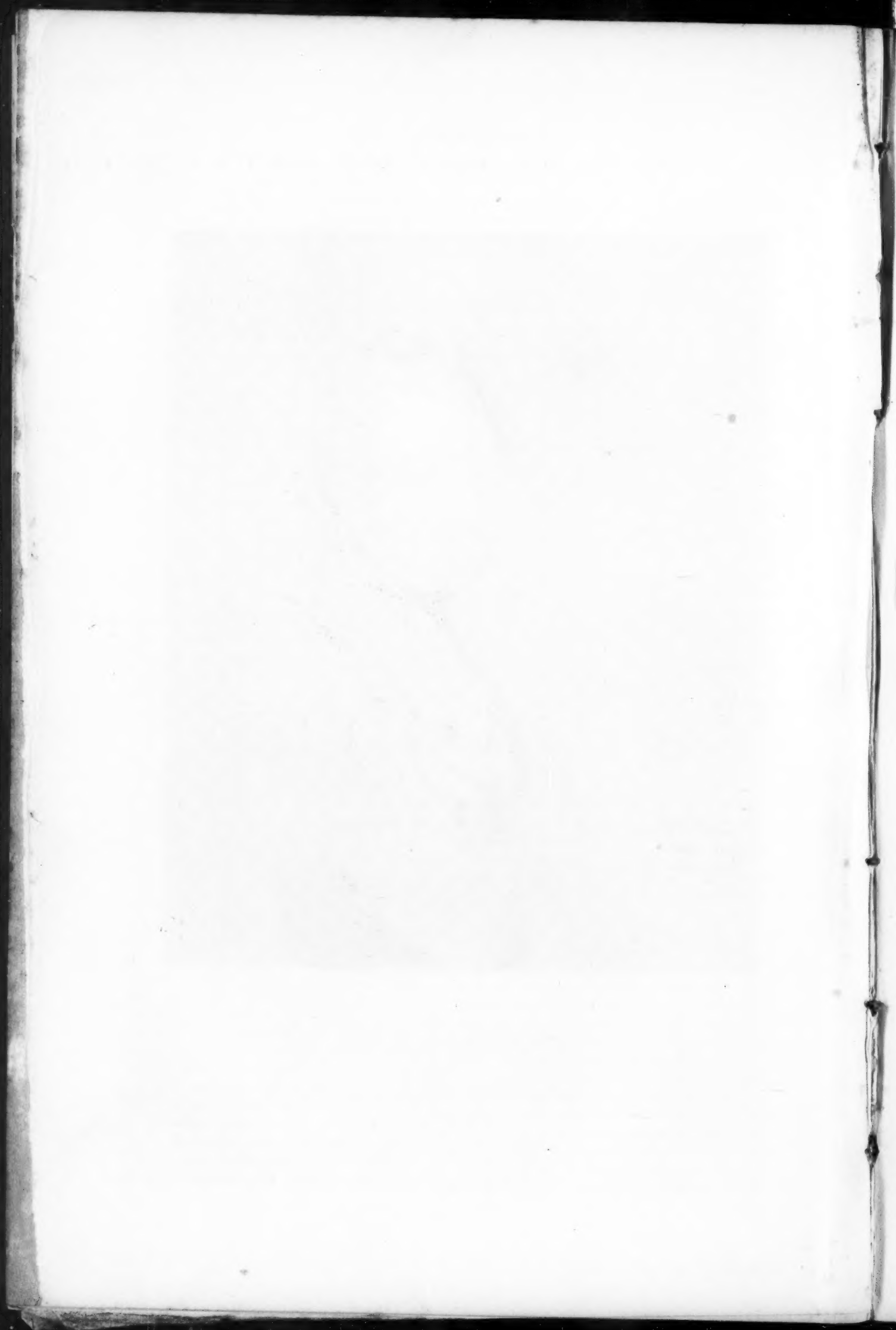
There did exist in Spain, up to the commencement of the present century, a grand exception to this universal love of equality, which is a characteristic of the Latin races. And that was the veneration for royalty, which partook of the oriental and fabulous extreme of respect. Nowhere is this more manifest than in the popular drama of the country: in which the Spanish monarch precisely resembles the Sultan of the Arabian Nights, as the vicegerent of Providence, the universal righter of wrongs, endowed with ubiquity, omnipotence, and all-wisdom. Two centuries' succession of the most imbecile monarchs greatly impaired, if not effaced, this sentiment. The conduct of Ferdinand to the men and the classes engaged in the war of independence, disgusted all that was spirited and enlightened in the nation. A few remote provinces and gentry thought, indeed, that the principle of legitimacy and loyalty was strong as ever, and they rose to invoke it in favour of Don Carlos. Their





## ESPARTERO.

*Engraved for CAMPBELL'S FOREIGN SEMI-MONTHLY MAGAZINE by John Sartain.*



failure has taught them and all Spain, that loyalty, in its old, and extreme, and chevalier sense, is extinct; and that in the peninsula, as in other western countries, it has ceased to be fanaticism, and survives merely as a rational feeling.

Royalty is however the only superiority that the Spaniards will admit; and their jealousy of any other power which apes, or affects, or replaces royalty, is irrepressible. A president of a Spanish republic would not be tolerated for a month, nor would a regent. The great and unpardonable fault of Espartero was, that he bore this name.

Another Spanish characteristic, arising from the same principle or making part of it, is the utter want of any influence on the side of the aristocracy. For a Spanish aristocracy does survive: an aristocracy of historic name, great antiquity, monied wealth, and territorial possession. The Dukedoms of Infanta-do, Ossune, Montilles, &c., are not extinct; neither are the wearers of these titles exiled or proscribed; nor have their estates been confiscated or curtailed. But they have no influence; they have taken no part in political events; and are scarcely counted even as pawns on the chess-board of Spanish politics. The Spaniards respect superiority of birth, but their respect is empty. It is rather the respect of an antiquary for what is curious, than the worldly and sensible respect for whatever is truly valuable. The greatest efforts have been made by almost all Spanish legislators and politicians, to make use of the aristocracy as a weight in the political balance, and as a support of throne and constitution. But as Lord Eldon compared certain British peers to the pillars of the East London Theatre, which hung from the roof instead of supporting it, such has been the condition of all Spanish peers or proceres in any and every constitution. They supported the government of the time being; were infallibly of the opinions diametrically opposite to those of the deputies; and increased the odium of the ministry, whether *moderado* or *exaltado*, without giving it the least support. The rendering the upper chamber elective, as was done by the constitution of 1837, has not remedied this. When Christina fell, the upper chamber was to a man in her favour; so did the whole upper chamber support Espartero, when he fell. In short, the attachment of the peers in Spain is ominous; it betokens downfall.

The crown and the clergy, in fact, had laboured in unison to destroy and humble the

power of the aristocracy, as well as of the middle classes. They succeeded but too well; and in succeeding, they also strengthened that democratic principle of equality which is a monkish principle. But the crown, and the monasteries, and the aristocracy, have all gone down together, whilst the middle classes survive, and have become regenerated with a second youth. It is only they who have any force in Spain. It is the cities, which take the initiative in all changes and all revolutions. For any government to incur their displeasure, is at once to fall; none has been able to struggle against them. These juntas raised the war of independence, and performed the Spanish part of their self-liberation. They again it was who enabled Christina to establish at once her daughter's rights and the name of a constitution. They afterwards compelled her to give the reality, as well as the name. And it was they, too, who drove Don Carlos out of the country, in despite of the tenacity and courage of his rustic supporters. He was driven from before Bilbao, and from every town of more respectability than a village. He was welcomed by the peasants and their lords, but every collection of citizens rejected him, and he and absolutism were obliged to fly the country.

There is one class, which at the close of revolutions is apt to turn them to its own profit, and become arbiter of all that survives in men and things. This is the army. In nations however which have no external wars, it is exceedingly difficult for the army or its chiefs to win and preserve that mastery over public opinions, which is needed to ensure acquiescence in military usurpations. The French revolution, as we all know, turned to a warlike struggle between France and Europe; in which France was represented by her generals and armies, and in which these but too naturally took the place of civilian statesmen and representative assemblies. In the more isolated countries of England and Spain, the activity and the glory of the military terminated with the civil war. The career of arms was closed; the officers lost their prestige; and Cromwell, though tolerated as a *de facto* ruler, was never looked up to, either as the founder of a military monarchy, or of a new dynasty. A Cromwell would have met with more resistance in Spain; civilian jealousy is there as strong as in England; and Cromwell there was none. The Duke of Victory's worst enemies could not seriously accuse him of such ambition.

Baldomero Espartero was born in the year



1792, at Granatula, a village of La Mancha, not far from the towns of Almagro and Ciudad Real. In his last rapid retreat from Albacete to Seville, the regent could not have passed far from the place of his nativity. His father is said to have been a respectable artisan, a wheelwright, and a maker of carts and agricultural implements.

This artisan's eldest brother, Manuel, was a monk in one of the Franciscan convents of Ciudad Real, capital of the province of La Mancha. It is one of the advantages amongst the many disadvantages of monasticity, that it facilitates the education and the rise of such of the lower classes as give signs of superior intelligence. The friar Manuel took his young nephew, Baldomero, and had him educated in his convent. Had Spain remained in its state of wonted peace, the young disciple of the convent would in good time have become, in all probability, the ecclesiastic and the monk. But about the time when Espartero attained the age of sixteen, the armies of Napoleon poured over the Pyrenees, and menaced Spanish independence. It was no time for monkery. So at least thought all the young ecclesiastical students; for these throughout every college in the peninsula almost unanimously threw off the black frock, girded on the sabre, and flung the musket over their shoulder. The battalions which they formed were called *sacred*. Nor was such volunteering confined to the young. The grizzle-bearded monk himself went forth, and, used to privation, made an excellent *guerilla*. The history of the Spanish wars of independence and of freedom tells frequently of monkish generals, the *insignia* of whose command were the cord and sandals of St. Francis.

Young Espartero took part in most of the first battles and skirmishes in the south of Spain, and made part of the Spanish force, we believe, which was shut up and besieged by the French in Cadiz. He here, through the interest of his uncle, was received into the military school of the Isla de Leon, where he was able to engraft a useful military education on his former ecclesiastical acquirements: for to be a soldier was his vocation, and his wish was not to be an ignorant one. The war of independence was drawing to a close when Espartero had completed his military studies, and could claim the grade of officer in a regular army. But at this same time, the royal government resolved on sending an experienced general with a corps of picked troops to the Spanish

main, to endeavour to re-establish the authority of the mother-country. Morillo was the general chosen. Espartero was presented to him, appointed lieutenant, and soon after the sailing of the expedition was placed on the staff of the general.

The provinces of the Spanish main were then the scene of awful warfare. It is needless to inquire on which side cruelty began; the custom of both was almost invariably to sacrifice the lives, not only of captured foes, but of their relatives, young and aged. The war, too, seemed interminable. A rapid march of a general often subdued and apparently reduced a province in a few days, the defeated party flying over sea to the islands or to the other settlements: but a week would bring them back, and the victors in their turn thought fit to fly, often without a struggle. Even an engagement was not decisive. A great deal of Indian force was employed, and, in many respects, the Spaniards or Spanish-born came to resemble them in fighting. The chief feat of the action was one brilliant charge, which, if successful or unsuccessful, decided the day. For, once put to the rout, the soldiers never rallied, at least on that day, but fled beyond the range of immediate pursuit, and often with so little loss that the fugitives of yesterday formed an army as numerous and formidable as before their defeat. How long such a civil war would have lasted is impossible to say, had not foreigners enlisted in the cause, and formed legions which not only stood the brunt of a first onset, but retreated or advanced regularly and determinedly. The foreign legion was the Macedonian Phalanx among the Columbians. Owing to it the Spaniards lost the fatal battle of Carabobo, and thenceforward made few effectual struggles against the independents, except in the high country of Peru.

Espartero had his share of most of these actions. As major he fought in 1817 at Lupachin, where the insurgent chief, La Madrid, was routed. Next year he defeated the insurgents on the plains of Majocaigo, and in 1819 Espartero and Seoane reduced the province of Cochalamba. Soon after, the revolution that had for result the establishment of the constitution broke out in Spain; and the political parties to which it gave rise began to agitate the Spanish army in Peru. Then the viceroy, who held out for the absolute power of Ferdinand, was deposed; and the other generals, La Serna, Valdez, and Canterac, declared for liberty abroad as well as

at home, though they still fought for preserving the links that bound the South American colonies to the mother country. Espartero was of this liberal military party, and served as colonel in the division which under Canterac and Valdez defeated the Peruvian independents at Torata and Maquega, in January, 1823; actions which led to the evacuation of the Peruvian capital by the congress. The Peruvians then summoned Bolivar and the Columbians to their aid, whilst the two parties in the Spanish army, royalist and independent, divided and began to war with each other, on the news arriving of the restoration of Ferdinand. This afforded great advantage to Bolivar, and that chief pushed them with so much vigour, that the contending royalist parties ceased their strife, and united to overwhelm, as they thought, the Columbians under Paez, the lieutenant of Bolivar.

The Columbians had, however, learned to stand in action, and their cavalry even to return to the charge after being routed. Their obstinacy in this respect, here displayed for the first time, routed the old Spanish cavalry, hitherto thought so superior; and won the battle of Ayacucho, which dismissed to Spain all upholders of Spanish supremacy. The officers and generals sent home under this capitulation have been since known under the epithet of *Ayacuchos*. Among them were Canterac, Valdez, Rodil, Seoane, Maroto, Narvaez, Carrabate, Alaix, Araoz, Villalobos. Espartero had been previously sent home with colours and the account of success in Peru; success so soon reversed.

When these generals returned, there were of course many prejudices against them. They had taken no part in the liberal movement at home, which had nevertheless begun in the ranks of the army. Their having taken previous part in the war of independence ought to have pleaded for them; but most of them had been too young to have been then distinguished. Riego and Quiroga were the military heroes of the day. The soldiers of the constitution made indeed but a poor stand against the French invading army; still their efforts were not destined to be altogether vain, and the country preserved its gratitude towards them. On the other hand Ferdinand and his ministers showed no inclination to favour or employ the *Ayacuchos*; the royalist volunteers and the monks were the only militants that the old court trusted; and thus the largest body of officers of experience were inclined to range them-

selves under the constitutional banner, whenever it should again be hoisted.

The years from 1825 to 1830 were spent by Espartero, as colonel of the regiment of Soria, which was quartered the most part of that time in the island of Majorca. Previous to going there he commanded the depôt of Logrono on the Ebro, where he became acquainted with his present duchess, Señora Jacinta de Santa Cruz. Her father, an old officer, brother of the late captain-general in the south of Spain, was one of the wealthiest proprietors of the banks of the Ebro, and Señora Jacinta was his only child. The father was not willing to give her to the soldier, however high his rank. But the marriage took place, as such marriages do, the determination of the young overcoming the scruples of the old. The present Duchess of Victory was renowned for her beauty and conjugal attachment.

The death of Ferdinand opened a new era for Spain. His will conferred the succession upon his daughter, and the regency upon her mother. As the only hope of preserving the crown to Isabella, and influence to herself, Christina summoned to her counsels the liberals. They were of many shades; she chose the most monarchical; but was gradually obliged to accept the councils and aid of those who frankly meditated a liberal constitution. The ousted prince, Carlos, appealed to the farmers and the priesthood of the northern provinces; the absolutist powers of the east supplied him with funds; and the war began.

With very few exceptions all the military men embraced the side of the queen and constitution. The army felt no inclination to undergo once more the yoke of the priesthood. And even old royalist generals, such as Quesada and Sarsfield, turned their arms willingly against the Carlists. The *Ayacuchos*, or officers who had served in America, showed equal alacrity; especially those who, like Espartero, had even on the other side of the Atlantic been favourable to a constitution. Maroto was the only one of them, who, at a later period, took command under Don Carlos.

The first constitutional general, Sarsfield, was successful. He delivered Bilbao, the first seat of the insurrection and ever afterwards the key of the war, from the insurgents. Espartero was appointed captain-general of the province. But the apparition of Don Carlos in person, the funds he commanded, and the promises he made, gave fresh importance and duration to the war.

The greatest and most effectual military achievements are often those least talked about or noticed. The general who can organize an army fully, often does more than he who wins a battle; though indeed it is the organization that leads to the winning of the battle. The organization of the British army was the first and the greatest achievement of the Duke of Wellington; and it was for the Carlists the great act and merit of Zumalacareguy. Espartero did the same for the Spanish constitutional army, and thereby enabled it to overcome, by degrees and in partial encounters, the formidable and spirited bands opposed to it. Valdez, who commanded after Quesade, and who had been the old commander in Peru, committed the great blunder of fighting a general action against mountaineers: whom if he beat he did not destroy, whereas their repulsing him was his ruin. Rodil, more cautious, ran about the hills to catch Carlos. Mina, with a regular army, waged a war of partisans with peasants, who were far better partisans than his troops. Cordova, who succeeded, kept his army together; and handled the Carlists so roughly in one action that they shrunk from attacking him. But he conceived the same fears; declared that the war could only be carried on by blockading the insurgent provinces; and finally resigned.

Espartero had till then distinguished himself more as a brilliant cavalry officer, and a spirited general of division, than as a military leader of first rate merit: but his honest, frank character, his abstinence from the heat of political party and the opinion that he wanted political genius and ambition, led to his appointment by the more liberal government which then took the helm. The first care of the new commander was to restore discipline, by a severity till then unknown in the constitutional army. His execution of the *Chapelgorris* for plundering a church, is well remembered. His efforts to keep the army paid, often compromised his own private fortune; and placed him in many quarrels with Mendizabal and the finance ministers of the time. He certainly gained no pitched battles: but from Bilbao round to Pampeluna he kept the Carlists closely confined to their mountain region, punished them severely when they ventured forth, and never allowed himself to be beaten.

Nothing could be more advantageous than Zumalacareguy's position; intrenched like a spider in an inaccessible and central spot, from whence he could run forth with all his

force upon the enemy. Then, by threatening Bilbao, the Carlist general could at any time force the Christino general to take a most perilous march to its relief. Twice, indeed three times, were the Christinos forced to make this perilous march—the second time the most critical, for then Bilbao certainly could not have been saved but for the energy and aid of the British officers. To Lapidge, Wylde, and others, was due the deliverance of Bilbao. Espartero was then suffering under a cruel illness. No sooner however was the Luchana river crossed by British boats, than he sprang on horseback, forgot bodily pain in martial excitement, and led his troops through the Carlist cantonments and entrenchments, once more to the gates of Bilbao.

In despair, the Carlists then tried another mode of warfare. They left the northern provinces, and undertook expeditions through all the rest of Spain, to gain recruits and provisions if possible, and to find another Biscay in the mountainous south. The indifference of the population caused this to fail, and Don Carlos returned to the north. The aim of his general was then turned to the possession of Bilbao and Santander, strong places, which if mastered, the Carlist insurrection might repose there and act on the defensive. To secure these points, more formidable intrenchments were raised on the heights leading to these towns. Don Carlos hoped to form a Torres Vedras on the hills of Rmales and Guardanini. The great exploit of Espartero was his series of successful attacks upon these entrenchments in May, 1839. He drove the Carlists from all of them with very great loss; and from that moment the war drew to an end. The spirit of insurrection was broken, and justice allotted to Espartero the title of DUKE OF VICTORY.

The military struggle over, and the open rebellion put down, the parliamentary but scarcely more peaceful struggle between the two parties calling themselves constitutional, became prominent. When the emigration of the Spanish patriots took place in 1815 and 1823, in consequence of the absolutist reaction of Ferdinand, some of the emigrants betook themselves to England, some to France. Though paid little attention to by the governments of either country, the Spanish emigrants were cordially received by the liberal opposition in both countries; and each came to admire and adopt the ideas and principles with which he was placed in con-



tact. If Arguelles admired the frank school of English liberty, which allows popular opinion its full expression; Toreno and Martinez de la Rosa adopted the more cautious tenets of the French doctrinaires, or moderate liberals, who were for giving freedom but by handfuls, and who maintained that domination and influence should be confined to the enlightened few, and sparingly communicated to the ignorant many. One can conceive the existence of such a conservative party as this in England, where such influence exists, and where the aristocratic and well-informed classes do possess this influence. But the necessity of creating and raising these classes, as was the case in Spain, and the impossibility of getting churchmen and old aristocrats to act moderate toryism when they had been steeped and bred in absolutism, rendered the policy of the moderados a vain dream. They had no upper classes, no clergy, no throne behind them: for that of Isabella required, rather than gave support.

Conscious of this weakness, and seeing nothing Spanish around them on which they could lean, the moderados placed their reliance on France, and trusted to that alliance to keep peace in Spain, and win recognition from Europe. Louis Philippe had been enabled to do in France, something like what they laboured to effect in Spain: although he had been obliged to abandon an hereditary peerage, and to base his conservatism on the fears and prejudices of the upper class of citizens and commercial men. Spain wanted this class, yet Count Torreno and his friends endeavoured, with less materials, to effect in Spain more than had been done in France.

In the conflict between moderado and exaltado, Espartero had remained completely neutral. His sole anxiety during the war was to have his army well supplied. He saw that the exaltado minister did not do this with due effect, and as his army approached the capital in pursuit of the pretender, he allowed it to remonstrate. This very unwarrantable act overthrew the exaltados, and brought back the moderados to power. It was generally believed, however, to have been the result of an intrigue of the staff, who imposed upon the easy nature of the general. Espartero was known, notwithstanding his anxiety to improve the supply of his army, to have regretted the unconstitutionality of the step which produced this ministerial revolution. The circumstance

shows, at least, how little inclined was Espartero to pay court to the ultra-liberals, or to aim at assumptions of power through their influence.

After the convention of Bergara, which pacified the north, the war still continued in Aragon, and the army was kept actively employed under Espartero in that province and in Catalonia. There was no doubt, however, as to the issue. The moderados, in power, and delivered from the fear of Carlos and absolutism, entered at once on the fulfilment of their principles, and the establishment of more conservative bases of administration, than those which existed. For this purpose they took the most imprudent step that could have been devised. Had they attacked the press, and restrained its license; had they checked the turbulence of the lower classes, even by laws against association; had they passed the most severe penalties against conspiracy—the Spaniards would have borne all: but the moderados thought fit to attack the institution which is most truly Spanish, and that in which all classes of citizens, upper and lower, are most deeply interested. The moderados attempted to change the municipal institutions of the country, and to introduce a new and centralizing system in imitation of the French, and in lieu of the old Spanish system of *ayuntamientos*. Their elected municipal body and magistrates were certainly the key of the parliamentary elections, of the formation of the national guard, of local taxation, and in fact of all power. But to attack them was the more dangerous; and the first mention of the plan raised a flame from one end of the peninsula to the other. The French court pressed the queen regent to persevere, saying that no sovereign power could exist in unison with the present state of local and municipal independence: the queen regent did persevere, and obtained a vote of the cortes.

The Duke of Victory had at that time peculiar opportunities for judging the sentiments of the great towns of Aragon and Catalonia and Valencia: his army was quartered amongst them, and his supplies were drawn in a great measure from them. All these towns had made great sacrifices during the war, and their indignation was great at finding that the first result of that war should be a deprivation of their liberties. The Duke of Victory, how much soever he had hitherto kept aloof from politics, now wrote to the queen regent, and remonstrated with the min-

istry on the danger of persisting in the contemplated measures. His counsels were received with secret derision; but as the towns could not be repressed without the army, the general was told that no important resolution should be taken without his concurrence. He in consequence quieted the apprehensions and agitation of the townsmen.

The ministry persisted not the less in carrying out the law: but fearing the resistance or neutrality of Espartero, they begged the queen regent to go in person to Catalonia, under pretence of sea-bathing, in order to exercise her influence over what was considered the weak mind of the Duke of Victory. The French envoy, indeed, opposed this journey; and predicted with much truth, that if once the queen regent trusted herself to the army, and to the population of the great and liberal towns of Saragossa, Barcelona, or Valencia, she would be forced to withdraw the obnoxious law.

Christina and her ministers both persisted. Both knew Espartero's devotions to the queens, and they reckoned on his chivalrous nature to fly in the face of danger, rather than shrink in prudence from it. She set forth, and the Duke of Victory hastened to meet her at Igualada. Christina recapitulated all the theoretic and doctrinaire reasons of her ministers for humbling the pride and independence of the great Spanish towns; the Duke of Victory replied that perhaps she was right, though it seemed ungrateful thus to repay the towns for their late sacrifices and devotion to the constitutional cause. But right or wrong, another consideration dominated: and this was the impossibility of enforcing the law without producing an insurrection of the towns. "They could be easily reduced by a few common shot and cavalry-charges." The Duke of Victory replied, "That they might be so reduced, but that *he* refused to be the instrument or the orderer of such measures. But he was ready to resign."

The queen and ministers knew however, that the resignation of Espartero then would have led to a military insurrection; for the soldiers and officers had already suspected that they were about to be dismissed, and without compensation. The end of the interview was, that the Duke of Victory must keep the command at all events; and that Christina would consult her ministry, and at least not promulgate the law with the royal sanction till after further consultation and agreement with the commander-in-chief.

Christina hastened to Barcelona, met two of her ministers, and forgot in their exhortation the advice of the general and her promises to him. The consequence was the double insurrection, first of Barcelona and then of Valencia, which compelled her to abdicate.

Such were the events that produced the interregnum, and left the regency to be filled by the cortes. It was evident from the first that no one could fill that post to the exclusion of the Duke of Victory; and yet it must be owned there was great repugnance to elect him on the part of a great number of deputies. The honest patriots dreaded to see a soldier at the head of a constitutional government, and demanded that one or two civilians should be associated with him in a triple regency; but the greater number were of course the interested, the place and power-hunters; these saw in a triple regency many more chances of rising by favour, and obtaining office, than under a single regent, a military man, accustomed to order his aide-camp about, and utterly unskilled in appreciating address in intrigue and skill in courtiership; they, therefore, also demanded the triple regency, and at first there was a decided majority for this decision. It was then that the Duke of Victory declared, that the triple regency might be the best mode of rule during the minority of the queen, but that for himself he was determined to make no part of it. It would, he said, be a divided, a squabbling, and a powerless triumvirate. The true patriots then saw the danger of setting aside the general and the army, the instant after both had saved the municipal liberties of the country; they saw the probable result of setting up three not very eminent persons to perform together the all-important office; and waving their objections to Espartero, they agreed to vote him sole regent.

Thus was the Duke of Victory appointed, and he ever after showed his gratitude to the thorough liberal and patriotic party, who trusted him on this occasion. To them he delivered up the ministry: to them he promised never to interfere with the government, but to live as constitutional ruler, above the strife and struggles of parties. In this the Duke of Victory was wrong: he should have opened his palace, lived in the throng, listened to the complaints, the desires, the feelings of all parties, and made himself adherents amongst all. The Spaniards tender eminence only on the condition of its being affa-

ble, and look upon kings, as we said before, with a kind of Arabic sentiment, as summary righters of wrongs, and controllers of all that is iniquitously done by their servants administering power. Espartero thought he acted the sovereign most fully by shutting himself in a small palace, by doing business regularly, and by eschewing all the pleasurable and representative part of his functions. He understood little of the minutiae of politics, and cared not to talk of them. He gave no dinners, no balls, no *tertullias*, no card-tables. In short, his salary was clean lost to the courtiers and placemen, and would-be placemen. The women declared him to be a very dull Regent, and their condemnation was fatal.

The most inveterate enemies of the Regent were, however, the new and bastard portion of the Liberals—those whom the French ministerial papers called *Young Spain*: men jealous of the old Liberals of 1809 and 1821, who looked upon Arguelles and Calatrava as out of date, and who considered themselves representatives of a new and practical school of liberalism, superior to any yet discovered. Caballero and Olozaga were the chiefs of the party: but these gentlemen, however able as orators and writers, had never succeeded in attaching to them more than an insignificant number of followers. Timid, tortuous, and time-serving, they were of that class of politicians which can harass a ministry, but are incapable themselves of forming an administration. The Regent was sorely puzzled how to deal with them. Their speeches in the Cortes were backed at times by a large number of votes; but when he summoned them to his presence, and bade them form a ministry, they always declined. They had a majority for opposition, they said, but not for power. This might have puzzled a more experienced constitutional sovereign than Espartero. Soldier-like, he bade them go about their business. He was wrong. He ought on the contrary, like Louis Philippe in similar circumstances, to have facilitated their formation of a ministry; he ought to have smiled upon them; he ought to have lent them a helping hand; and then, after they had been fully discredited by six months' hold of power, he might easily have turned them adrift, as the king of the French did M. Thiers.

Secure in the affection and support of the old stanch liberal party, the Regent never dreamed that these could be overcome by

men affecting to be more liberal than they. But Spain was not left to itself. The French court became exceedingly jealous at this time of the Regent's intentions respecting the marriage of the young queen. They sent an envoy, who was called a family ambassador, and who as such pretended to immediate and uncontrolled access to the young queen. The Regent resisted, the envoy left, France was more irritated, and then determined on the Regent's downfall. Thirty journals were almost simultaneously established in Madrid and different parts of the peninsula, all of which set up the same cry of the Regent being sold to England, and of Spain being about to be sacrificed in a treaty of commerce. Barcelona, most likely to be affected by this bugbear treaty, was of course the centre of opposition; and there, under the instigation and with the pay of French agents, open resistance was organized, and insurrection broke forth. The subsequent events are known: the bombardment, the reduction, the lenity of the Regent, the impunity of the Barcelonese, and their perseverance even after defeat in braving authority.

The army was then tampered with: at least some regiments. The Spanish officer though brave is unfortunately a gambler and an idler, with little prospect of making way in his profession by talent or by promotion in war; all chances of the latter are at present cut off; promotion is now to be had only by revolutions, since, if these are successful, the military abettors rise a step. Then there are court ways of rising in the army: a handsome fellow attracting the attention of the queen or of a lady in whom king or minister is interested: and all these chances were precluded by the dull, moral regency of Espartero, to whose self and family and ministers, such ways and intrigues were utterly unknown. The young officers longed for the reign of the queens, young or old, and "down with Espartero" was first their wish, and then their cry.

Indeed from the first the Spanish officers were disinclined to Espartero as general, and much preferred Cordova, a diplomatist and a courtier; but the soldiers on the other hand preferred the Regent. With this class, then, especially with the non-commissioned officers, the efforts of the conspirators were chiefly made. Calumnies were circulated, promises lavished, the soldiers attached to the service were promised grades, the rest were promised dismissal to their homes: in fine, the



army was debauched, and when the Regent wanted to make use of it as a weapon of defence, it broke in his hands and pierced him.

The condemnation on which Espartero's enemies, the French, lay most stress, is his want of skill in maintaining himself in power. Success with them covers every virtue. The want of it exaggerates every defect. There was a discussion at Prince Talleyrand's one evening, as to who was the greatest French statesman in modern times. Each named his political hero. Talleyrand decided that Villèle was the greatest man, on the ground that in a constitutional country he kept the longest hold of power: adding, that the best rope-dancer was he who kept longest on the cord. The great proof of political genius, according to Talleyrand, was to stick longest in place. The rule is a wretched one, and yet Espartero would not lose by being even in that way judged: for no Spaniard has kept such prolonged command and influence, none have attained more brilliant ends. The Treaty of Bergara, and the Regency, are two successes that might well content a life. And after all Espartero was long enough regent to allow Spain to enjoy tranquillity under his rule, and to afford every one a taste and a prospect of what Spain might yet become, under a free, a peaceable, and a regular government.

A greater and more rare example offered to Spain by the Regent's government, was the honesty of its political and financial measures. There was no court nor court treasurer to absorb one-third or one-half of every loan and every anticipation, nor could the leasers or farmers of the public revenue obtain easy bargains by means of a bribe. Such things were disposed of by public competition; and Calatrava in this respect left behind him an example, which will render a recurrence to the old habit of proceeding too scandalous and intolerable.

So, morality and simplicity of life, though a cause of dislike with courtiers, with place and money-hunters, was on the contrary, a rare and highly-appreciated merit in the eyes of the citizens. No one cause occasioned more disgusts and revolts in Madrid than the scandals of the court of Madrid. Its removal was a great bond of peace, whatever people may say of the salutary influence of royalty!

The party attached to the regency of the Duke of Victory as the best symbol and guard of the constitution, lay chiefly in the

well-informed and industrious class of citizens, such as exist in great majority in Madrid, Saragossa, Cadiz. In Catalonia the manufacturers and their workmen were against him, from a belief that he wished to admit English cotton. Seville is an old archiepiscopal seat, where the clergy have great influence; and the clergy there, as well as rivalry of Cadiz, occasioned its resistance. There is, one may say, no rustic population in the south. All the poor congregate in towns, or belong to them, and form a mass of ignorant, excitable, changeable opinion, that is not to be depended upon for twenty-four hours. There is throughout a strong vein of republicanism, and a contempt for all things and persons north of the Sierra Morena; so that nothing is more easy than to get up an *alborato* against the government of the time being. The north of Spain, on the contrary, depends upon its rural population; and is slower to move, but much more formidable and steady when once made to embrace or declare an opinion. Throughout the north, neither citizens nor servants declared against the regent. It was merely the garrisons and troops of the line. Such being the force and support of the different parties, one is surprised to find that Espartero so easily succumbed, and we cannot but expect that his recall, either as regent or general, is sooner or later inevitable.

The career of the Duke of Victory being thus far from closed, it would be premature to carve out his full-length statue: to be too minute in personal anecdote, too severe or too laudatory in judging him. Our materials too are but meager; though the "*Galerie des Contemporains*" which heads our article is a popular and meritorious little work. Our present task is, however, sufficiently discharged. Señor Flores promises at Madrid a life of Espartero in three volumes; and the Duke of Victoria and Spain are subjects that we shall have ample occasion and necessity to recur to.

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#### "THERE IS A TOMB AT ARQUA."

Petrarch's tomb at Arqua has just been restored by the care of Count Leoni. In the course of the works, the remains of the great poet were uncovered, and part of the body was found almost untouched by time. A fragment of cloth in which he was enveloped was taken away, and will be solemnly deposited in the parish church.

From Colburn's New Monthly Magazine.

# RECOLLECTIONS OF THE EMPEROR NAPOLEON.

(Continued from page 91.)

BY MRS. ABELL, (LATE MISS ELIZA BALCOMBE.)

AFTER HE LEFT HER FATHER'S RESIDENCE,  
"THE BRIARS," FOR LONGWOOD.

No. III.

WITH the assistance of my daughter's pencil, and some rough sketches I had by me, I have been enabled to give a view of the Briars, and the cottage occupied by Napoleon whilst he stayed with us. He certainly appeared very contented during that time, and frequently expressed a strong desire that the government would permit him to remain there, by purchasing the estate; and on their refusing to do so, he sent General Montholon to negotiate with my father, that he himself might become the purchaser of the Briars; but circumstances (probably political) prevented the negotiation from taking effect.

Napoleon used to watch with great interest the fatigue parties of the 53d regiment, as they wound round the mountains above us, carrying on their shoulders the materials wherewith to render Longwood fit to receive him; and as the time of its completion drew near, he manifested his discontent, by grumbling at the sounds of the fifes and drums, to which the soldiers of the 53d used to toil up those steep acclivities, as serving to warn him of the speedy termination of his sojourn at our cottage.

Shortly after the ex-emperor left the Briars, we proposed riding to Longwood to see him, feeling much interested to know how he was accommodated, and rather, it may be, hoping to hear him make a comparison in favour of the sweet place he had left for the steril-looking domain in which his house was placed; and I remember being in a state of ecstasy at the prospect of again beholding my old play-mate, the loss of whose society I had so deeply regretted.

We found him seated on the steps of his billiard room, chatting to little Tristram Montholon. The moment he perceived us, he started up and hastened towards us. Running to my mother, he embraced her on each cheek; after which fashion he welcomed my sister; but as usual with me, he seized me by the ear, and pinching it, he exclaimed,

"Ah, Mademoiselle Betsee, êtes vous sage, eh, eh?"

He then asked us what we thought of his palace, and bidding us follow him, said he would show us over his *ménage*.

We were first conducted to his bedroom, which was small and cheerless. Instead of paper-hangings, its walls were covered with fluted nankeen; and the only decorations I observed, were the different portraits of his family, which, on a former occasion, he had shown to us.

His bed was the little iron camp-bedstead, with green silk hangings, on which he said he had slept when on the battle-fields of Marengo and Austerlitz. The only thing approaching to magnificence in the furniture of this chamber, was a splendid silver wash-hand-stand bason and ewer. The first object on which his eyes would rest on awaking was a small marble bust of his son, which stood on the mantel-piece facing his bed, and above which hung a portrait of Marie Louise.

We then passed on through an ante-room to a small chamber, in which a bath had been put up for his use, and where he passed many hours of the day. The apartments appropriated to him were the two I have just mentioned, with a dressing-room, dining-room, drawing-room, and billiard-room. The latter was built by Sir George Cockburn, and was the only well proportioned room of which Longwood could boast.

After all these chambers were exhibited, and commented on by Napoleon, he proceeded with us to the kitchen, where he desired Pieron, the confectioner, to send in some creams and bon-bons for Miss Betsee. From thence we went to the larder, where he directed our attention to a sheep that was hanging up, and said, laughingly,

"Regardez—voilà un mouton, pour mon dîner—ou en a fait lanterne."

And true enough it was so, the French servants having placed a candle in its lean carcass, through which the light shone.

After we had gone all over his rooms, he conducted us to those of Madame Montholon, and introduced me to a little stranger, the countess's baby, only then six weeks old, and which he began dandling so awkwardly, that we were in a state of terror lest he should let it fall. He occasionally diverted himself by pinching the little creature's nose and chin until it cried.

When we quizzed him for his *gaucherie* in handling the child, he assured us he had

often nursed the little King of Rome when he was much younger than the little Lili.

Before terminating our visit, Napoleon took us over the garden and grounds which surrounded his house. Nothing could exceed the dreariness of the view which presented itself from thence; and a spectator, unaccustomed to the savage and gigantic scenery of St. Helena, could not fail of being impressed with its singularity. On the opposite side the eye rested on a dismal and rugged-looking mountain, whose stupendous side was here and there diversified by patches of wild samphire, prickly-pears, and aloes, which served but slightly to break the uniform sterility of the iron-coloured rocks, the whole range of which exhibited little more than huge apertures of caverns and overhanging cliffs, which, in the early years of the colonization of the island, afforded shelter to herds of wild goats. I remember hearing Madame Bertrand tell my mother, that one of Napoleon's favourite pastimes was, to watch the clouds as they rolled over the highest point of that gigantic mountain, and as the mists wreathed themselves into fantastic draperies around its summit, sometimes obscuring the valleys from sight, and occasionally stretching themselves out far to sea, his imagination would take wing, and indulge itself in shaping out the future from those vapoury nothings.

As a diversion to close the day, the emperor proposed a ride in his Irish jaunting-car. Our horses were accordingly sent on to Hutsgate, the residence of Madame Bertrand, and accompanied by Napoleon, we set off at a hard gallop. I always was, and still am, the greatest coward in a carriage; and of all vehicles, that jaunting-car seemed to me to be the one to inspire terror. It was driven by the fearless Archambaud, with unbroke Cape horses, three abreast, round that most dangerous of roads called the Devil's Punch-bowl. The party occupying the side nearest the declivity, seemed almost hanging over the precipice; while the others were apparently crushed against the gigantic walls of the perpendicular rock. These were drives which seemed to inspire Bonaparte with mischievous pleasure. He added to my fright by repeatedly assuring me the horses were running away, and that we should be all dashed to pieces.

I never shall forget the joy I experienced on arriving in safety at Madame Bertrand's, and finding myself once more mounted on my quiet little pony, Tom.

After Napoleon had been on the island a few months, some newspapers arrived, containing anecdotes of him, and all that occurred during his stay at the Briars. Amongst other *sottises*, was a letter written by the Marquis de M——, in which he described all the romping games that had taken place between Napoleon and our family, such as blind-man's-buff, the sword scene, &c., ending his communication by observing, that Miss Betsee was the wildest girl he had ever met, and expressing his belief that the young lady was *folle*.

This letter had been translated into the German and English journals. My father was much enraged at my name thus appearing, and wished to call the marquis to an account for his ill-nature: but my mother's intercessions prevailed, and she obtained an ample apology from the marquis.

On hearing of the affront that "Miss Betsee" had received from the *vieux imbécile*, as Napoleon generally denominated him, he requested Dr. O'Meara would call at the Briars on his way to St. James's Valley, with a message to me, which was to let me know how I might revenge myself. It so happened that the marquis prided himself on the peculiar fashion of his wig, to which was attached a long cue. This embellishment to his head, Napoleon desired me to burn off with caustic. I was always ready for mischief, and in this instance had a double inducement, as the emperor promised to reward me, on receipt of the pigtail, with the prettiest fan Mr. Solomon's shop contained. Fortunately I was prevented indulging in this most hoydenish trick by the remonstrances of my mother.

The next time I saw the emperor his first exclamation was, "Eh, bien, Mademoiselle Betsee, a tu obei mes ordres et gagné l'éventail?"

In reply, I made a great merit of being too dutiful a daughter to disobey my mother, however much my inclination prompted me to revenge the insult.

He then pinched my ear in token of approval, and said, "Ah, Miss Betsee, tu commences à être sage."

He then called Dr. O'Meara, and asked him if he had procured the fan. The doctor replied that there were none pretty enough.

I believe I looked disappointed, on perceiving which Napoleon, with his usual good nature, consoled me with the promise of



something prettier; and he kept his word; in a few days I received a ring composed of brilliants, forming the letter N, surmounted by a small eagle.

The only revenge I took on the marquis was, by relating an anecdote of his greedy propensity, which diverted Napoleon very much. He was very fond of cauliflowers, which vegetable was rare in the island, and when dining with us one day at the Briars, his aide-de-camp, Captain Gor, had omitted to point out the fact of there being some at table, and it was only when about being removed that the marquis espied the retreating dish. His rage was most amusing, and with much gesticulation exclaimed, "Bête! pourquoi ne m'a tu pas dis qu'ils y avaient des choux-fleurs?"

During one of our riding excursions we encountered Napoleon, who was returning from Sandy Bay, where he had been to visit Mr. D——, who resided there. He expressed himself delighted with the place, and spoke in high terms of the urbanity of the venerable host of "Fairy Land."

This gentleman had passed all his life at St. Helena, and at this time had arrived at the advanced age of seventy, without ever having left the island. His appearance was most prepossessing, and to those who loved to revel in the ideal and imaginative, he might have been likened to a good genius presiding over the fairy valley in which he dwelt.\*

I asked Napoleon if he had remarked, when at Sandy Bay, three singularly formed rocks, shaped like sugar-loves, and called Lot's wife and daughters? He replied that he had. I then related an anecdote connected with the largest of the three.

More than half a century had elapsed since two slaves, who preferred a freebooting life to that of labour and subjection, secreted themselves in a cave halfway up the acclivity which terminates the spiral rock, called "Lot's wife." From this stronghold their

\* A few years after the emperor's visit, Mr. D—— was induced to come to England; and thinking that he might never return to his lovely and beloved valley, he had a tree felled from his own "fairy land," from under the shade of which he had often viewed the enchanting scene around, and had his coffin made from the wood. His arrival in England, and his interesting character, being made known to the Prince Regent, afterwards George IV., his R. H. desired that Mr. D—— might be presented to him; and his Royal Highness was so gratified with the interview that he afterwards knighted Mr. D——, who subsequently returned to his loved Island.

nocturnal sallies and depredations were carried on with great success, and their retreat remaining undiscovered for a long time, they became the terror of the island. They were at length, however, tracked to their rocky hold, where they stood a long siege, repelling all attacks, by rolling stones on their assailants. It was at last deemed necessary to send a party of soldiers to fire on them if they refused to surrender; but this measure was rendered unnecessary by the superior activity of one of the besieging party who managed to climb the rock, reach the opposite side of the mountain, and clambering up, gain a situation above the cave, the mouth of which became thus exposed to the same mode of attack which had effected its defence: so that when one of the unfortunate freebooters approached the edge of the precipice to roll down stones he was crushed to death, and his companion, who was following him, severely wounded. Many of the islanders believe to this day that the ghost of the murdered slave is seen to make the circuit of the wild spot wherein he carried on his nightly orgies; a superstition easily accounted for from the circumstance of the summits of the mountains being generally encircled by light mists, which wreath themselves into all kinds of fantastical shapes; thus to the eye of superstition giving to "an airy nothing a local habitation and a name." In St. Helena every cavern has its spirit, and every rock its legend.

Napoleon having listened to my legend of the Sugar-loaf Mountain, said he should regard it with greater interest the next time he rode in that direction.

One of the many instances of Napoleon's great good-nature, and his kindness in promoting my amusement, was on the occasion of the annual races at Deadwood, which at that time were anticipated by the inhabitants of the island as a kind of jubilee. From having been, as was often the case, in arrears with my lessons, my father, by way of punishing me, declared that I should not go to the races; and fearing that he might be induced to break his determination, he lent my pony to a friend for that day. My vexation was very great at not knowing where to get a horse, and I happened to mention my difficulty to Dr. O'Meara, who told Napoleon, and my delight may be conceived when a short time after all our party had left the Briars for Deadwood, I perceived the doctor winding down the mountain-path

which led to our house, followed by a slave leading a superb gray horse, called Mameluke, with a lady's side-saddle, and housings of crimson velvet embroidered with gold.

Dr. O'Meara said that on telling the emperor of my distress, he desired that the quietest horse in his stable be immediately prepared for my use.

This simply good-natured act of the emperor occasioned no small disturbance on the island, and sufficiently punished me for acting contrary to my father's wishes, by the pain it gave me at hearing that he was considered to have committed a breach of discipline in permitting one of his family to ride a horse belonging to the Longwood establishment, and for which he was reprimanded by the governor.

We were told by Napoleon the next day, that he had witnessed the races from the upper windows of General Bertrand's cottage, and expressed himself much amused by them. He said he supposed I was too much diverted by the gay scene to feel my usual timidity.

Bonaparte frequently urged my father to correct me whilst young, and said I ought never to be encouraged in my foolish fears, or ever permitted to indulge therein. He said the Empress Josephine suffered the greatest terror in a carriage, and he mentioned several instances of her extreme fright, when he was obliged to reprimand her severely. If I remember rightly, the Duchess D'Abrantes mentions in her memoirs of the emperor, one of the anecdotes on this subject which he recounted to us.

There was so little to vary the monotony of Napoleon's life, that he took an interest in the most trifling attempts at gaiety in the island, and he generally consented to our entreaties to be present at some of the many entertainments my father delighted in promoting. On one occasion my father gave a fête to celebrate the anniversary of my birthday, at a pretty little place he possessed within the boundary of the emperor's rides, called Ross Cottage: so named as being the abode for a short time of a much-esteemed friend, the flag-captain of the Northumberland, whom Bonaparte always designated as "un bravissimo uomo." When the festivities were at their height we descried the emperor riding along the hill-side towards the house; but on seeing such an assembly he sent to say that he would content himself with looking at us from the heights above.

I did not consider this was fulfilling his promise of coming to the party, and not liking to be so disappointed, I scampered off to where he had taken up his position, and begged he would be present at our festivity—telling him he must not refuse, it being my birthday. But all my entreaties were unavailing;—he said he could not make up his mind to descend the hill, to be exposed to the gaze of the multitude, who wished to gratify their curiosity with the sight of him. I insisted, however, on his tasting a piece of birthday cake, which had been sent for that occasion by a friend in England, and who, little knowing the strict surveillance exercised over all those in any way connected with the fallen chief and his adherents, had the cake ornamented with a large eagle, and which, unluckily for us, was the subject of much animadversion. This I named to Napoleon, as an inducement for him to eat of the cake, saying, "It is the least you can do for getting us into such disgrace."

Having thus induced him to eat a thick slice he pinched my ear, calling me a "saucy little simpleton," and galloped off, humming, or rather attempting to sing with his most unmusical voice, "Vive Henri Quatre."

One morning we went to call on Madame Bertrand, and found Napoleon seated by her bedside. We were about retreating, thinking we had been shown into the wrong room, when he called out, in his imperfect English, desiring us to enter, and asked what we were afraid of, saying,

"I am visiting my dear loaf, my mistress."

My mother observed that the latter term had a *strange* signification, and that it was never used in our language to express friendship. He laughed heartily at the awkward error he had made, and promised not to forget the interpretation of the word for the future, repeating that he only meant to express that Madame Bertrand was his dear friend.

It was by Napoleon's especial desire that we ventured now and then to correct his English; and being very anxious to improve himself, he never let an opportunity pass when in our society, without trying to converse in English, though, from his exceedingly bad pronunciation, and literal translations, it required the most exclusive attention to understand him. For my part I seldom had patience to render him much assistance, my sister being generally obliged to finish

what I had begun; for in the middle of his lesson I would rush away, attracted by some more frivolous amusement. On returning, I was always saluted with a tap on the cheek, or a pinch of the ear, with the exclamation of,

"Ah, Mademoiselle Betsee, petite étourdie que vous êtes, vous ne deviendrez jamais sage."

Bonaparte, on one occasion, asked us if we had seen little Arthur, who was about a month old; and he repeated Madame Bertrand's speech on introducing the child to him.

"Allow me to present to your majesty a subject who has dared to enter the gates of Longwood without a pass from Sir Hudson Lowe."

He sat chatting a long time, and quizzing me about the short waist and petticoats of my frock. He took great pleasure in teasing me about my trousers, as he knew I disliked being called a little boy, and which he always made a point of doing when he espied the trousers. He thought the fashion of wearing short waists very frightful, and said, if he were governor, he should issue an order that no ladies were to appear dressed in that style.

Before leaving Madame Bertrand's cottage, he joined the children in a game of puss in the corner, to which I acted as Maitresse de Ballet.

Napoleon used to evince great curiosity about the subject of our conversations when we called on Lady Lowe, at Plantation House, and asked whether they discussed our visits to Longwood.

I told him that the same sort of interrogation went on there, and that I was sure to be sharply (though goodnaturedly) cross-questioned, about what we did, and what we heard, when in his presence.

One evening, whilst on a visit to Madame Bertrand, we strolled up to see Dr. O'Meara, who happened to be engaged with the emperor. Cipriani, however, sent in to say that some ladies were waiting to see him, and on Napoleon hearing our names, he requested us to come in. We found him in the billiard-room, employed looking over some very large maps, and moving about a number of pins, some with red heads, others with black.

I asked him what he was doing. He replied that he was fighting over again some of his battles, and that the red-headed pins were meant to represent the English, and the black the French. One of his chief amusements was, going through the evolutions of

a lost battle, to see if it were possible by any better manœuvring to have won it.

From Colburn's New Monthly Magazine for October.

### SACRIFICE OF A HINDOO WIDOW.

FROM THE DIARY OF A BRITISH OFFICER.

THE *suttie* took place at a village a few miles from our camp, and horrible as it may sound to stand by and see a fellow-creature—a woman—burnt to death, yet my brother, and the young civilian, being the only magistrates in the neighbourhood, considered it their duty to attend the ceremony, in hopes of dissuading the infatuated victim from her purpose, or failing of this, at least to rescue her in the event of her springing off the pile; for if no Europeans were present, the brutal Brahmins, would, under such circumstances, thrust her back into the flames; and instances have occurred where the woman's life has been saved by the interposition of a magistrate, even after the fatal pile has been lighted.

When we arrived at the spot, we found a number of Brahmins erecting the funeral pile close to the sea; and it excited feelings of unutterable disgust, to see the relations of the unfortunate widow laughing and jesting as they arranged the horrid apparatus. They appeared to look forward with pleasure to the approaching tragedy, and no one seemed to bestow a thought on the fearful sufferings which the victim of superstition must endure ere the sacrifice was completed.

The pile was composed of logs of wood interspersed with layers of dry straw, sugar-canes, and other combustibles; this was covered with a mat, and to render it still more inflammable, was saturated with *ghee*, or clarified butter. The height of the erection might be about four feet, the breadth being just sufficient to admit of two bodies lying side by side; and above it was a platform of dried wood, so constructed as to fall upon the bodies, as soon as the fire consumed the slight props by which it was supported.

After about two hours spent in building the pile, a confused din of trumpets and tomtoms announced the arrival of the widow, preceded by the corpse of her husband, and followed by a crowd of friends and relations. She was a beautiful young creature not more than eighteen or nineteen years of age, and my blood ran cold as I saw her led forth like a lamb to the slaughter.

Much as I had heard of the courage dis-



played by Indian women in the act of self-immolation, I did not believe it possible that one so young, and of so delicate a frame as the present victim, could behold the dreadful apparatus prepared for her destruction without a shudder. But no traces either of sorrow or of fear were visible on her placid countenance. She seemed to have taken leave of this world for ever, and to have fixed her every thought on the prospect of meeting her husband in eternity.

Her pale, interesting features, gave the most perfect idea of resignation. And her firm step and self-possessed manner satisfied us that no exciting or stupifying drugs had been administered to prepare her for the awful ceremony.

We had come determined to save the poor creature if possible, and were more than ever anxious to do so now that we had seen her.

While the corpse was being prepared for the funeral pile, we insisted on being allowed an interview with the intended victim, and made use of every argument we could think of to dissuade her from her purpose. We offered to make her a handsome allowance for life, and to protect her from the malice of the priests if she only consented to live. But all was of no avail. The accursed Brahmins had done their work too well.

If a widow refuses to sacrifice herself, those crafty hypocrites, those ministers of the devil, expel her from her caste with curses and ignominy; she is looked upon as a degraded being; she cannot marry again; she becomes an outcast, shunned and despised by all; and even her nearest relatives dare not countenance her. In the temples women are daily exhorted to this act of self-immolation, by promises of eternal happiness, and threatened with poverty, scorn, and infamy, if they allow the natural love of life to prevail.

Is it then to be wondered at that poor, ignorant creatures, thus urged and threatened by a crafty priesthood, prefer death, even a fiery death on the funeral pile, to life purchased at such a price?

The poor girl appeared grateful for the interest we took in her; and a tear—the first we had seen her shed—trembled on her long silken eyelashes as she thanked us; but her resolution remained unshaken. She presented each of us with a cocoa-nut, which she begged us to keep for her sake; and waving her hand with the air of an inspired being, she motioned us to withdraw.

To my dying day I shall never forget that scene.

As we turned to depart, I saw a devilish smile of triumph steal over the countenance of the officiating priest.

The corpse having been stripped, and washed in the sea, was stretched naked as it was upon the ground in front of the funeral pile; and the widow, seating herself at the head, prepared to take leave of her relations. It was very affecting to see her aged mother throw herself at her daughter's feet, kiss them, and bid her farewell.

The poor girl's firmness could not withstand this trial—she wept bitterly—but it was only for a moment. Waving her hand as if wishing to be left to her own thoughts, she appeared to forget every thing upon earth, and with her face raised to heaven called incessantly on her gods. Her attitude was that of intense devotion; and except when disturbed by persons kissing her feet, or making her touch cocoa-nuts, which are then esteemed holy, she never moved a limb.

During this time the priests chanted passages from their sacred books, promising eternal happiness to their poor victim if she kept up her courage and completed the sacrifice. When they had finished, the corpse was laid upon the funeral pile, and the widow, unassisted, walked three times round it. Having completed the third round, her little brother knelt at her feet and kissed them, while her father poured oil upon her head; and the unfeeling monsters who surrounded her, many of them women, raised a joyful shout, mingled with peals of laughter, as if exulting at the near approach of the last awful ceremony. It was fearful to behold such hardness of heart, particularly among women.

The young widow's earthly career was now drawing rapidly to a close. A few moments more, and she would be suffering the most horrible of deaths. But her eye quailed not, not did her lips quiver. She ascended the fatal pile as if it had been her bridal-bed; and stretching herself by the side of the loathsome corpse, already in an advanced stage of decay, she clasped it in her arms, and rested her beautiful head on the breast, which was literally a weltering mass of corruption.

It was fearful to behold the living and the dead thus united; to contrast the rounded limbs and graceful figure of that fair girl, with the bloated, grinning corpse which she

held in her embrace. My heart sickened at the sight, and a feeling of deadly faintness came over me; but I had strength to see the tragedy completed.

I was close to the pile, and watched the poor victim's countenance narrowly; it was pale as death, but perfectly placid. She never moved a muscle, and appeared more like a marble image than a living being. Even on the brink of eternity, with the prospect of so fearful a death before her eyes, the fortitude inspired by a blind and devoted superstition, supported her through the trial.

When all the preparations were completed, a horrid yell was raised, and a number of men rushed, with lighted torches, towards the pile, shouting, dancing, and screaming like demons. In an instant the whole was in flames. Heaps of burning straw fell on the two bodies. The death shriek of the wretched victim was drowned amidst the roar of a thousand voices.

The bickering flames rose high above the pile. All was one glowing mass of fire, and the poor creature's sufferings were ended. Once I saw her struggle, but it was only for a moment, and dreadful though her agony must have been, it could not have lasted above a few seconds. The wind was high, and the dry wood burnt with such fury, that in a few minutes, more than half of the pile was consumed, and no one would have guessed that two human bodies were smouldering in the midst of it.

As we turned to leave the accursed spot, the worthy doctor, who had hitherto remained a silent but deeply affected spectator of the dreadful ceremony, found it impossible any longer to restrain his indignation, and striding up to the principal Brahmin, he gave vent to his outraged feelings, by damning him to his heart's content in choice Malabar, of all known languages, the one most abounding in powerful anathemas.

#### PAUPERISM IN HOLLAND.

A letter from Amsterdam, dated September 9th, states that pauperism in Holland has reached a frightful extent—

"It appears," says the writer, "that in 1841, the charitable institutions relieved 595,093 individuals; which number, compared with the whole population, estimated at 2,931,143 souls, is at the rate of one to five. The number of charitable institutions is 6331: and the sum expended by them in 1841 amounted to 19,026,993 florins (about 1,604,000*l.*)"

VOLUME IV.—29

From the United Service Magazine for October.

#### GENERAL SUWARROW.

IN the reign of Catherine, one of her armies of 17,000 men, headed by Romantzow, defeated a prodigious force of Turks and Tartars; and about this time arose a leader for her troops, whose genius comprehending at once their peculiar character, enabled him to make the utmost of it,—Suwarrow, whom posterity has learned to regard as a mixture of the soldier, the monster, and the buffoon. Brought up in the career of arms from his youth, and endowed with that degree of unerring sagacity, and inflexibility of resolution which cannot fail to lead to greatness; and well aware, from his long military experience of what is most required in war, he conceived the idea of working on the religious fanaticism, and the superstition of the Russian soldier. He found that hitherto his most valuable qualities were fortitude and obedience, and a steadiness which was the result of fearing more to disobey his superiors, than the danger which surrounded him. Suwarrow succeeded in infusing into him a more active principle of action, in inspiring him in the belief in the sanctity of his cause, which led with many to a contempt of death, which fanaticism is as likely to give rise to in the timid as in the bold; and in animating all with a superstitious confidence in himself, as a man called to conquer, and chosen by the Almighty will to lead them to victory. He attracted the attention of the army by innumerable eccentricities and buffooneries; and, to become a conqueror, he consented to be regarded by his soldiers as half an idiot; but an idiot inspired of heaven to lead its chosen people against the Turkish infidel, and the impious republican of France, who had denied his God. To all his most skilful movements he affected to give an air of chance, or rather of fatality; for he foresaw that whatever his success, if attributed to its real cause, the soldier would never have had the same confidence in the infallibility of his military genius, as in the infallibility of heaven, which otherwise was supposed to guide him. On a cold winter's day this general has been known, after giving the order to march, by imitating the crowing of the cock, to mount on the bare back of a horse, with no other clothing but his shirt, and to lead his troops against the enemy.

For years he had never carried watch or money about his person; when he slept beneath a roof, it was on straw, and with all the windows open; he dined in drilling the troops on a crust of their black bread; and the Field Marshal of Imperial armies was seen for whole days teaching his recruits their exercise, in his shirt sleeves, as if he had no duty more important to attend to. He was the Junius Brutus—not of freedom—but of ambition. If he made his warriors by turns tremble at his severity, or laugh at his buffoonery, it was evident that he also knew how to make them fight. Under his command, the two most dreadful storms took place which modern history records, those of Ismael and of the suburb of Praga; and the same army which twenty years before could only be forced by batteries of cannon in their rear, to assault the feeble walls of Ochacow, is seen carrying at the point of the bayonet fortifications containing armies within almost as powerful as those attacking them from without, and at an expense of life which renders them unparalleled in history. In Poland, in Italy, and in Switzerland, during his wars, the Russian soldiers showed an individual gallantry which they had never been known to display; they never surrendered, though surrounded, but died embracing the image of their saint, which was attached in an amulet to their necks. In these men, the republicans met with adversaries animated with an enthusiasm equal to their own; and whose leader was endowed with a degree of boldness, of prudence, and a consummate skill, which turned the balance in their favour, and led them from victory to victory, until the defeat of the detached army of Khorsakoff obliged Suwarrow to make that remarkable retreat before Massena, which crowned his military reputation, and left his veterans the right to boast, as we have heard some of them do,—that Suwarrow was never *cold*, *afraid*, or *defeated*.

His career was, on the whole, so brilliant and so successful, that one cannot but regret that his extraordinary abilities should not have been devoted to a nobler cause. After his Turkish campaigns, he conquered Poland, although defended by the most able of her patriots—Kosciusko—the friend and companion in arms of Washington,—the man who, with six thousand Poles withstood the assault of the whole Russian army on one occasion, and whose talents would probably have insured the independence of his country,

had he not been opposed by a genius which, although the genius of rapine and conquest, was still more mighty than his own. At the moment that the Prussians had been forced to raise the siege of Warsaw, that fortune was beginning to favour the Polish arms, and the approaching winter would shortly have rendered all the roads impassable to the invading armies, after a most obstinate struggle, we find the army of the Polish hero defeated, and himself made prisoner upon the field, losing with his own liberty the liberty of Poland. In his subsequent campaigns in Italy, he had to contend with the most successful troops in Europe, commanded by the most skilful generals of their time, in the series of hard-fought battles against Moreau and Macdonald. He defeated and drove them before him, not by dint of superior numbers or Austrian co-operation, as the French historians would disingenuously insinuate, for the reverse was often the case, that is to say, that including the Austrians, he was in most instances inferior in force to the Republicans, and that the Austrians, discouraged by incessant defeat, were despised both by their allies and their enemies. At Novi, in a sanguinary battle, he defeated the young and hopeful General of the Republic, Joubert, who never quitted that fatal field. Weakened by a long succession of bloody combats, in which he had fought his way always victorious, he crossed the Alps, to effect in Switzerland a junction with the reinforcing army which Khorsakoff had led from Russia, and with the aid of which he proposed to carry the war upon the territory of the republic; but Khorsakoff proved the Asdrubal of the Muscovite Hannibal; for, instead of bringing him the addition he had expected to his strength, he arrived in his camp as a fugitive, leading after him the wretched wreck of the defeat of Zurich. This battle, in which the difference of the Russian leaders was throughout apparent, showed also strikingly the peculiar spirit of the Russian soldier of that date. Broken up, and divided into small groups, they were mostly cut down without surrendering, and muttering their prayers when isolated, defended themselves till the last gasp. After the masterly retreat Suwarrow made when checked by this disaster, which it never lay in his power to have controlled, he was recalled, and died in disgrace, after nearly half a century of uninterrupted successes.

Suwarrow, instead of being the rough, un-



tutored, and semi-barbarous soldier, which he did every thing to make himself appear, or the monster of cruelty which the popular tradition of Western Europe represents him, was a man of liberal education, of subtle and sagacious mind, and whose persevering cunning induced him to play all his life, before the public, the singular part which he had thought proper to act. The habits of the character he had assumed, had grown upon him: he had so long feigned the buffoon, the punster, and the man acting by impulse, that even all his communications with his Sovereigns bore the impress of his grotesque originality; and Catherine and her court found in the captor of Ismael and of Praga, and in the conqueror of Poland, an obscene jester, and a guard-house wit, until, casting aside this garment of folly, in the council he proved himself the eloquent politician, and the far-seeing statesman, as well as the sagacious soldier, and the man of execution. When campaigning in Italy, Suwarrow, who was supposed to be ignorant as his soldiers, was opening a correspondence with the Venetian insurgents in the west part of France, to whom he wrote with his own hand, in the French language; and he owed not a little of his success in Italy to his policy. That he was a mere soldier, heedless of bloodshed in the field, and reckless of human life, is undeniable; but he never, throughout his career, committed any act of more wanton cruelty than any other of the generals of his time, whose conduct posterity has never thought of branding with this vice. It is true a prodigious massacre took place at the storming of Ismael; and on a similar occasion his troops put mercilessly to the sword ten thousand of the inhabitants and of the defenders of the suburbs of Warsaw. But this is one of the dreadful laws of war, which, when a place is taken by assault, the victorious soldiers seldom fail enforcing, and which many years after we find the Duke of Wellington unable to prevent his men from carrying into execution in all its most sanguinary horrors at the taking of St. Sebastian, against the friendly Spanish population within it. He is reproached with quietly taking a bath whilst the massacre was going on in the streets of Praga, and with having, whilst the Turkish city was paying the same fearful penalty, penned to the Empress Catherine an account of his success, in the well-known laconic epistle, consisting of two doggerel rhymes, which translate literally—

Glory to God, and glory unto you!  
The fort is taken, and I am in it—too!

But these acts prove only indifference to the suffering around him—an indifference which must be pretty general amongst those who mingle in such scenes, but argues no wanton delight in it. His address to the empress, which Byron cites as so blasphemous, is yet no more so than the *Te Deums* and Thanksgivings by which the Almighty is so impiously insulted, after every successful scene of murder and butchery, by nations far more civilized, and which profess to be the enlightened followers of the mild doctrines of that Christ who ordered Peter to put up the sword of aggression; and who commands his disciples, when they received a buffet on one cheek, to turn the other meekly towards their enemy. When the deputies from Warsaw came to Suwarrow whilst the sack of the suburb was proceeding, having obtained the terms of surrender which they proposed for the city, viz., that the lives and property of its inhabitants should be spared, they were hurriedly departing, when Suwarrow called them back, "You have forgotten," he said, "to stipulate an amnesty for the past; I grant it you." In the course of his campaigns in Poland, he has performed several generous acts, such as sending his own surgeon into a fort he was besieging, to attend to the commander, and curing a wounded officer of the hostile army in his own camp, and then giving him again his liberty. That he held too cheaply human life to have spared it, where he could forward the execution of his projects, can no more be doubted of him than of most of the generals of his epoch; but we have in vain searched his history to find any acts which would show the innate barbarity with which his conduct has been stigmatised; but we have fallen on a few actions scattered through the pages of that turbulent life, which rather tend to prove the contrary.

After Suwarrow we perceive the Russian armies more numerous on every field of battle, but far degenerated from what they had been under his command. At Austerlitz, under Koutousoff, who commits innumerable blunders during the battle, though 80,000 strong, they are signally defeated. If their obstinacy rendered the battle much longer undecided than those of Wagram or of Jena, and if it was gained by the evident superiority of Napoleon's genius, the Russian soldiers no longer showed the same individual reck-

lessness and enthusiasm which in the previous campaigns so animated them to fight to the last; for if we do not perceive them throwing down their arms by brigades and divisions according to the pusillanimous example of their German allies, still 19,000 Russians surrender to the victor on the field. After the utter defeat and dispersion of the Prussians at Jena and Auerstadt, the Russian armies which had advanced to their assistance, are driven before the French at Czar-now, Mohrungen, Pultusk, and Golymin, but never signally beaten; at Eylau a drawn battle is the result of a sanguinary engagement; and in the following spring, with great loss, and after a hotly-contested fight, the armies of Napoleon again conquer the Russians at Friedland. In Turkey, a Russian army under Bagration, is defeated by the Turkish vizir, with a loss of 10,000 men. In the next great engagement the Russians force the Turkish camp at Schoumla. In the memorable invasion of the Muscovite Empire by Napoleon, we see nothing but indecision in the generals of her armies; and with the exception in a few of the movements of Doctouroff and Bagration, a descendant of the kings of Georgia, we look in vain for any bold or clever combination. At last, however, means were found to arouse the religious fanaticism of the peasantry of the army. Koutousoff, the vanquished of Austerlitz, but one of the national party, and a man who was wisely an advocate for taking advantage of the fervid enthusiasm existing in the ranks of the soldiery by leading them to battle, was appointed to the command; the result was the battle of Borodino, the most obstinate and sanguinary of any which took place during all the wars of the last century; and it was rendered so by the fanatical excitement of the Russian troops, and of the newly-embodied peasantry marching in their first fight with the resolution of those who seek for martyrdom against enemies who were represented as the desecrators of their churches, and the enemies of their creed. This spirit, aroused by the artful policy of Government, and confirmed by the sight of their own villages smoking around the track of the invaders, could at this period only have been awakened under similar circumstances; it rendered the raw recruit more formidable in that memorable contest than the old veteran, because he had drank more deeply of the patriotic and superstitious inspiration. If the effort of the Russian army were not crown-

ed with success, we must remember that they fought against the most select and imposing force which the French conqueror had ever collected together, and that he purchased his victory so dearly, that like that of Pyrrhus against the Romans, it was palpable that another such must have undone him. This was the last field very glorious to the Russian arms. When the tide of war turned and flowed back from the ruins of Moscow to the walls of Paris, in the innumerable combats which led to this revulsion, the French armies, discouraged and over-matched by overwhelming numbers, proved at least indubitably they would easily have triumphed singly over any of the continental allies, whose union rendered them too powerful for their shattered strength. The Russian troops, though still the most formidable of the coalition, were no longer the same as in the reign of Catherine and Paul, or else the armies of Napoleon's declining empire must have been superior to those of the young republic, which is a position we think that no one who has examined the subject will venture to assume.

The pages of Danilefsky, the late aide-de-camp of the Emperor Alexander, and the historian of his campaigns, furnish us a graphic, modest, and strikingly impartial account of this interesting war, an impartiality which one would little expect, that a Russian general should set the example to military historians, and which it is a pity that he has not adhered to in all that relates to the Emperor his benefactor, on whose conduct his gratitude showers incessantly enthusiastic encomiums, although we must and that this adulation of a man who is now only dust and ashes, if it shows that he has allowed his personal feelings to warp his private judgment, has at least none of the meanness of servility, and probably is bestowed in all the sincerity of truth, because the author is now in a kind of honourable disgrace with the present Court, to which these lavish praises on his late Sovereign has contributed.

We next find the Russians engaged in the Turkish war of 1828; they cross the frontier with 163,000 men. During the course of this campaign the Turks show on every occasion how their spirit, which animated them even in their last wars, has died away; they scarcely make one bold attempt in the field, against their invaders, they appear to trust for their defence to rudely fortified towns,

pestilence, climate, and that providence, which the Islamites seem of late years to forget, vouchsafes to assist only those who will attempt to help themselves. Before the small irregularly fortified town of Brailow, we find, for many weeks, all the efforts of the Russian army striving to reduce it in vain; under the eye of the Grand Duke Michael, they endeavour to storm its walls, they are beaten back, and the garrison at last capitulates. The Emperor Nicholas commanded in person his army, which meets the Turkish forces near Bouloulouk; all its efforts can only force them to retire to the circumvallation of their camp. Here the Russians do not venture to attack them. Varna is besieged for nine weeks, and Youssouf, who commands the fort, only gives it up to Russian gold—he retires into Russia—he receives a pension from the Emperor, and it is only long after the peace that the Porte is obliged at the demand of his victor to receive back the traitor.—Let us contrast this a moment with the campaigns of Suwarrow and Romantzow, who never united one-fourth of these forces in the field, against Turkish armies more warlike and more numerous; yet Suwarrow is seen storming the strong, well-garrisoned and desperately defended Ismael, when in 1828, the army of Nicholas cannot carry the feeble walls of Brailow, neither can it succeed in defeating, in an open field, those very Turks whom Romantzow attacked in their intrenched camp, when with his small army he defeated the Vizier, with a hundred and twenty thousand men. The war proceeded as it had begun; the Russians repulse the Turks at Tchorlau and at Schoumla, without being able to defeat them, at a prodigious loss of men, and without obtaining one single advantage; the inanity of their adversaries still allows them to advance. The next campaign opens with the Russians, under Diebitch, and the commander of the Turkish army, Reschid Pasha, takes the field with only thirty thousand regulars, and some sixty thousand irregulars, consisting of undisciplined and ill-armed vagabonds of every description. The decay of the power of the Ottoman empire, and her enfeebled condition, requires no comment, when we find that this was all the force her utmost efforts could bring together in such an exigency. Near Devno, at Yeni Bazar, the demoralized Ottoman army easily gives way. At Koutefcha they make a more spirited re-

sistance; they are defeated, but the turn of a straw would have decided the affair in their favour to the destruction of the Giaours. Diebitch crosses the Balkan, and advances on Adrianople, which he occupies, and the panic of the Turks induces them to sue for peace at the very moment when the effect of fatigues and disease, produced partially by the unfitness of the Russian soldiers to contend with these disadvantages, and partly by the incurable vice of the administration of the army, had so far enfeebled the invader, that their *position had become highly critical*. The successes of Paskevitch in Asia, owing to his own activity and talent, and the ineffectual measures taken to oppose his advance, by striking terror into the councils of the Porte, there is every reason to believe, alone changed the disasters which awaited Diebitch Zabalkansky—(Crosser of the Balkan) into a triumph. Of 40,000 men who crossed the Balkan with Diebitch a third were lying sick a few weeks after. Of the troops drawn from the interior of Russia and marched towards the Turkish frontier 120,000 had melted away upon the road—of those who entered the Turkish territory, in Europe and Asia, during the two campaigns 150,000 perished from fatigue and pestilence, and 25,000 by the sword.

The Polish revolution in 1830 next led to the invasion of Poland by an army of 130,000 Russians under Diebitch Zabalkansky. At this time the predilection which Nicholas has always evinced for the Germans was so strong that three-fourths of the chiefs of his forces, including Diebitch their commander, were Germans, and the names of Pahlen, Toll, Geismar, Sacken, Rudiger, Rosen and many more, attested a partiality highly offensive to the Russians. The Poles, who were never able to muster above 30,000 regulars altogether, or more than 50,000 men including all species of auxiliaries, upon one field, fought with characteristic gallantry; at Gobie and Okouniew they retire after a desperate resistance before an immense numerical superiority. The battle of Wawre lasted two days; after a sanguinary combat both armies retained their positions, though the Russians had 70,000 men upon the field against 45,000 of their adversaries.

The Russian army was now increased to 200,000 men, besides reserve corps which placed these effectively at the disposal of Diebitch. At Seroczyn Geismar is defeated by Dwernicki, and at the battle of Grochow



victory seemed at first to declare for the Russians; for a moment it was supposed that Diebitch would have taken possession of Praga, the suburb of the capital, but after a desperate struggle he was repulsed and forced to retire. Geismar and Rosen are defeated by Skrzynecki before Warsaw with considerable loss, and again at Kostrzyn and at Inganié. After many such indecisive affairs we find the Poles defeated at Ostrolenka, and obliged to retreat on Warsaw, but notwithstanding, Diebitch could effect nothing decisive, till death either by poison or from natural causes removed him from the scene of strife, and Paskevitch the favourite of the Muscovite party, took the command. The Poles, who had lost the flower of their army in successive battles, who were disunited amongst themselves, and without confidence in their leaders, after the battle of Warsaw were forced to yield to the overwhelming numbers of the Russian army and the boldness and skill displayed by their new leader. Unhappy Poland was again erased from the list of independent nations—her children reduced to slavery, except those few whose miserable exile their countrymen have since been taught to regard as a comparatively happy fate. But what, let us ask, would these modern Russian armies, which notwithstanding all these advantages have so much difficulty in subduing the Poles, have done, had their numbers been reduced to those of Suwarrow's forces, or had they had a Kosciusko to contend with? From the retrospection of the military annals of this ambitious power amidst the accounts of fearful waste of human life, we may thus deduce this consoling fact, that the armies of Russia are no longer what they were, and that if they are still to be dreaded, they have grown no stronger as they have increased in size, but rather the reverse, like a venomous plant in the close air of a hot-house, where its sudden growth has only weakened the amount of its poison.

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ROB ROY.

In the list of subscribers to "Keith's History of the Affairs of the Church and State in Scotland," published in Edinburgh in 1743, there occurs, amongst the names of a considerable portion of the nobility and gentry of the kingdom, that of "Robert Macgregor," *alias* Rob Roy.

From Tait's Magazine for October.

### THE CLOSE OF MANY SESSIONS.

"*The Close of the Session*," is a heading that, for some weeks back, has met the eye in every newspaper; and each Journalist is louder than the other in reprobating the "unprofitable," the "shameless," the "do-nothing" session, and poor Sir Robert Peel, who has made it so "shameless," and "profitless," and "do-nothing." Far be it from us to say that this condemnation is not merited; though we are obliged to extend the blame and the title, and assume as our heading, *The close of many Sessions*. It is now nine years since Lord Brougham, with perhaps more honesty and frankness than policy, told the grumbling Reformers, that "if little had been done in the session just past, then less would be done in the next." Every one was indignant; and not without some reason, as many visionary and extravagant hopes had been cherished from the "Reform Ministry," then in the first flush of power. In themselves not extravagant were these hopes, but in the men in whom they were placed. Unfortunately, Lord Brougham's predictions have been more than verified, though he is innocent of their accomplishment; for, not only in the next, but in every successive session, little, and less, has been done, until that just closed, when all parties agree that nothing whatever has been done. And if we measure what has been accomplished by the legislature and the government by what is required for the relief of the country, for the restoration of public tranquillity and confidence, and the permanent improvement of the social condition of the people; then, how emphatically true is it, that nothing has been done in the last eight sessions, either by the Whigs, who suffered some obstruction in the few good measures which they proposed, or by Sir Robert Peel, who met with no obstacle which he did not foresee, and which, therefore, in accepting office, he was virtually pledged to encounter and surmount, or to resign.

The history of any one of these do-nothing sessions, is nearly the history of the whole series; and, without further change in the system of government, and, above all, in the character of the House of Commons, that of the nine may become that of ninety-nine, if the disjointed, undermined, and crazy fabric should, by patching and tinkering, be held together so long. It is impossible to foretell whether, unless timely wisdom avert the

calamity, it is destined to fall to pieces from inherent weakness and corruption, or to be rent asunder in some fierce and sudden anarchical convulsion. It is every day more evident, that upon the present system the people cannot long be kept quiet, although contentment under legislative injustice, under selfish class-government, could be a desirable state for any people calling themselves free. A dreadful social crisis, or prompt measures of reform too bold and sweeping to be seriously entertained either by the present Administration or its predecessor, appears the only alternative before the country. Public confidence is, for the time, completely destroyed. Every class is uneasy, and either suffering from the actual pressure of poverty, or from vague fears of coming dangers and changes. Every Conservative apprehends that he alone perceives the true causes of the evil; and every one is ready, not with a mere remedy, but a universal panacea for all our ills. The High Churchman sees the evil in Dissent—trembles for the supremacy of his church, and becomes more mischievously active, bigoted, and intolerant. The landowner and colonist tremble for their breadtax, their high rents, and monopolies; but neither will relax their grasp,—nor act the growing glimmering conviction, that their safety lies in doing tardy justice to their countrymen of England and Scotland, as well as of Ireland. Some who will not surrender their stolen slice of the poor man's loaf upon any terms, yet affect to pity and lament the condition to which he has been reduced by "the manufacturing system," "over-production," "competition," "machinery," "the greedy Irish priests and demagogues," and the "rapacious manufacturing capitalists!" They propose to administer remedies of their own devising, for grievances which they deny to be of their own infliction,—and they will give the people every thing save what they most want and ask for. They will not be allowed the elective franchise which they demand; but the Church is anxious to educate and train them all, in good order, passive obedience, and Church-of-Englandism, as expounded by the latest fashion of Oxford, and the more humane and enlightened of the aristocracy begin to ponder that, though denied their birth-right, their mess of pottage should not be withheld, lest, already discontented, they wax rebellious beyond all control. These enlightened persons would give the people every

thing but justice and fair-play. They would give them, when starving, a right to food in their Union workhouses, such as it is; and education in their schools, such as it might be. Some would even go the length of interfering with the rights of all employers, (save themselves,) and forcibly, that is, by legislative enactment, raise wages. They would better the condition of the working-classes at the expense of the manufacturing capitalists, with the greatest good-will, if that were possible: but to free their bread from taxation, and their labour from trammels, and allow them a voice in the framing of the laws and the management of their own affairs through their freely-chosen representatives—that they will never concede:—without the gentle coercion of "pressure from without," neither Whigs nor Tories will. It is the contemplation of this great want—the want of an extended suffrage—of the elementary power, the instrument of working the institutions of government for the common good of all classes, from the highest to the lowest, and the very slow approximation making towards it, which renders many zealous reformers at present almost indifferent to the few beneficial measures of legislation, and the very few practical reforms that have been wrung from the successive resisting governments since the passing of the Reform Bill. For every administration has been one of resistance; the prime minister and his colleagues acting as the advanced guard, the protectors of the landowners and monopolists. And with a parliament so constituted, he is, in fact, bound to be this; bound, above all, to study "the paramount interest of the country—the landed interest;" as if the social well-being of the whole people of the country were not its first—its infinitely greatest interest.

The distinctive feature of every administration since, as before, the passing of the Reform Bill, is resistance to the people, and submission to the Oligarchy; to those who still nearly make, and wholly overrule the legislature. And the system is so contrived that this governing class which, left to itself, would decay and die out, should be continually recruited from the best blood of the country; from the intellectual vigour, the industry, talent, and wealth developed among the people. It never decays; and its unseen but ever-present power presses in every direction. The chief business of every British minister is to gratify this governing class, to

maintain its interests and extend its privileges. It gives him his majority, and this majority he has to work for its selfish purposes, and so as to procure a certain amount of revenue, and retain his own place. For what higher objects than these did Sir Robert Peel, to go no farther back, go into office? He found the Court in an ill humour—though it has mollified—but he obtained a powerful and tractable House of Commons. The whole strength of the Tory party was at his back. He was, as a minister, powerful beyond calculation—positively in his own strength, negatively in the weakness of the party he had turned out—and almost popular with the middle class, whom the Whigs had alienated and disgusted. There were some confidence and great hopes placed in his Free Trade principles, and in his knowledge of the vital interests of the country, as they are now bound up with manufacturing industry.

No important organic change was expected from an avowed Tory, undergoing the process of absorption into the aristocratic body, though not yet completely amalgamated with it: but there were hopes of "practical measures" from a man of large experience and some sagacity, who was still vibrating between the order from which he had risen and that to which he was tending; and who might, therefore, be presumed to have some sympathy with the former. A concurrence of favourable circumstances enabled Sir Robert Peel to carry almost any practical measure of commercial reform that he liked to propose, had he acted with promptitude and energy. But he has frittered away the opportunity exactly as the Whigs did one more golden; and with it any reputation for great statesmanship which he ever enjoyed. Mr. Poulett Thompson said truly of Peel, "There is no great chance of carrying the House with one for any great commercial reforms—timber, sugar, corn, &c.; party and private interests will prevent it. If Peel were in, he might do this, as he could muzzle or keep away his Tory allies; and we should support him. If he got in and had courage, what a field for him! but he has not." It is now evident that the present man is not "the coming man;" and as no one can tell where that Phoenix is to be looked for, it is full time that the people set about working out their deliverance by their own earnest and united efforts. The men of the League see this, and do not relax in their patriotic la-

bours. And how powerful for all good might the Suffrage party be did they follow this example, and were they as united as they are earnest!

We are not going to waste words in condemning the policy of Sir Robert Peel, or in vilifying him. That pleasant duty may safely be left to "the organs of Opposition." The Tories—the more ignorant of them—say he has deceived them. The Liberals could expect little from him; and it is enough that he has fallen far short of that little. He is not the Samson who is to burst the cords of the Philistines, although he had courage to venture the trial; and, moreover, he is in the same trammelled position in which every English Minister must find himself while the present system lasts. He has done his ministerial duty to the best of his ability: attempted to maintain rents by a Sliding-scale; set his face determinedly against the inroads threatened to the Sugar Monopoly; recruited the finances by the only means that, by his small policy, remained to him—an Income-tax; and by the changes in the Tariff, showed what might be done by a man who had courage to set about the work in the right spirit. By that measure the governing class have been a great deal more frightened than hurt. Sir Robert Peel, a man of large landed property, understands how their interests are to be promoted better than they do themselves.

It is now evident that, like his predecessors during the Melbourne term of precarious Whig existence, Sir Robert Peel took office without any great or consistent plan of policy of any sort. He put to sea without a compass, trusting to his good fortune and the stars; and feeling somewhat proudly that the country, nay, the insolent aristocracy, could not do without *him*—"the cotton-spinning *parvenu*"—that he had triumphed over the bed-chamber ladies, and the proudest blood of England. He might have had—and may now have, if he has any hope left—some confidence in the partial revival of trade from simply natural causes. The customary period of excessive depression was passing away; and good harvests and better employment for labour must produce their natural effects of cheapness and good humour. And so the thing might last his time. And when did any British Minister, for the last forty years, act as if he looked to any thing beyond his own probable term of office? The nature of our government forbids it, although the intellect and patriotism of Peel and Pitt—



and we may throw the Whig chiefs into the bargain—were combined in one individual. The Prime Minister of England, however large or generous-minded, has not to consider what he ought to do as a statesman—not what would be best for the country, whether for its present relief or permanent prosperity, but what the Parliament, or, more accurately, those who make and control the Parliament, will permit him to do beyond his prescribed routine: the business of laying on taxes, defending profitable abuses, and resisting the just demands of the people. Whatever his good-will might be, if he hopes to keep place, he can do no more for the country than the Church and the land-owners, and the other “great interests” consent to—and that is just nothing: so he is prudent enough never to propose any thing. The alternative of resigning when great and necessary measures cannot be carried—the only alternative left to a conscientious and high-minded man—never seems to occur to an English Minister: and for why? What is the poor country to do if deprived of the benefit of his indispensable services? That the Minister of the day is the bound thrall of the aristocracy, requires no proof. Pitt, in early life, saw and advocated the necessity of purifying and renovating the institutions of the country by Parliamentary Reform; but it was a full half century later before the clashing interests of the dominant factions, at a critical historical juncture, obtained that measure for which the public mind had long been ripe, and the people long clamorous. It was, with a few exceptions, from no abstract love of a free and broadly-based representation of the people, that the Whigs became all at once violent reformers. They longed for power and place, baited their hook with Parliamentary Reform, and having caught their gudgeon, soon showed how very small was the *final* measure of reform which they deemed sufficient, and how identical is the policy of Whigs and Tories when in power, and their selfish interests and elementary feelings of *caste* at all times. To take an example—the Established Church, whatever it may fancy, has as firm a friend in Lord John Russel as in Sir Robert Peel; and the Anti-Corn-Law League and the Complete Suffragists as decided an opponent. Consequently, if Sir Robert Peel has sunk to zero in the general estimation, the rival leader has not risen as he went down. The country is too much in earnest, too seriously impressed by the growing symptoms of na-

tional decline—and when Ireland is looked at, with the menacing aspect of the times—to take much pleasure in merely clever displays of parliamentary oratory or skill in debate, leading to nothing; and the public feeling out of doors has happily outgrown all sympathy with the despicable dog-in-the-manger tactics of a merely factious Opposition. The leader of the Opposition must not again, like Sir Robert Peel, tell a suffering people—“I have a remedy for all your maladies, acute and chronic; but it is not my business to prescribe till I am regularly called in.” If the Whig State-doctor has any great remedial measure beyond the alteration of the sugar duties and the soothing system for Ireland, he would surely have propounded, or at least have hinted at it. The inference is that he has none. The Tories, or some of them, go as far as the Whigs in redressing Irish grievances, when they speak of endowing the Roman Catholic clergy, and even of giving up that “incubus”—the Church of Ireland, to its inevitable fate. Sir Robert Peel goes further than any minister ever went before, when he hints at inquiring into the law of landlord and tenant—at, in other words, endeavouring to mitigate, by legislation, that excessive poverty which has been allowed to grow up in Ireland, and which is, after all, the master-grievance of that unhappy and devoted country, which bad legislation and worse government has permitted to grow into the fearful condition of being “Evil to herself, and a terror to all around her.” We shall not at present say more of Ireland, than that, whatever has been done, has been ill done; though the *Fabian* policy to which Sir Robert Peel has tied himself up, seems not the worst that might be adopted under the circumstances. It is, however, unfortunate that he did not begin to do nothing before the senseless and irritating dismissal of the Repeal Magistrates, and passing the, at best, useless Arms Bill. *To do nothing* has become the policy of a temporary expediency, which, if followed up when the lull comes, if it ever comes, by wise and large measures of justice, and a generous spirit of conciliation, may not be so blame-worthy. It is, at all events, surely better to do nothing, than to issue violent proclamations, and pass Coercion Bills. But why, in such a crisis, do not all the English proprietors of Irish estates help Sir Robert, and *do something*? Much of the prevailing misery and mischief is fairly attributable either to the *do-nothing*, or the *do-wrong* management of that Irish

property which, to judge by their acts, they seem to think has been created only to yield them rack-rents. Why do not they, individually, take the proper means to inquire into, and redress the grievances of their revolted serfs?—The very attempt would be conciliatory. We forbear, at this time, scrutinizing the motives of Mr. O'Connell in the renewal of the Repeal agitation. After having done so much for his native country, it cannot be his object, in his latter days, to bequeath to Ireland the legacy of a violent disruption, followed by a sanguinary civil war. No man can foresee the end of these things. Mr. O'Connell has fairly invoked a spirit before which he may yet tremble. Powerful though he seems, he is not altogether omnipotent. He can no more throw a flaming brand into the gunpowder which he has placed in a dangerous position, and bid it not explode, than any fallible Saxon.

Whatever be the result of this movement—and we trust that it may issue in real “justice to Ireland,” and consolidation to the United Empire—it cannot be forgotten that it has been the obvious policy, the constant aim of O'Connell, not merely to coerce the British Government into concessions,—in which the end might often fairly be held to justify the means,—but to keep alive among his excitable countrymen that international and religious jealousy and hatred to which they are naturally too prone; to inspire them with the most rancorous feelings towards their British fellow-subjects; to maintain perpetual dissension, where the best interests of both the nations demanded not only a legislative union, but a union of sentiment—of heart and hand—for the attainment of those objects which Mr. O'Connell affects to hold so desirable for both. But we waive the discussion of Irish affairs, upon which there is, we think, a growing unanimity of sentiment in Britain. The Liberal party—and it is no mere handful—has always been desirous of giving “justice to Ireland;” if by that is meant giving the Irish entire equality with “the Saxons” in every civil and religious right and privilege; together with such special remedial measures as the peculiar condition of the Irish people, from misgovernment and other causes, may render necessary; and the *Illiberals* now perceive the necessity of adopting the same course. If the agitation for Repeal has helped to open their eyes, it has not been without use, nor is it without vindication. Nay, so much do we admire the principle of *peaceful agitation*, that we

should be very glad to see much more of it at home; and the time is not unpropitious. At present we are all alike, Whig, Tory, and Liberal, sulky, or bitterly malcontent. The Reformers are in despair of government's ever effecting the relief of the country from not merely the present disastrous commercial crisis, but from the growing tendency—the more and more frequent recurrence of such crises, every one of which leaves us in a more disabled condition than before, and demonstrates that the system has lost its vigour and elasticity. To a certain extent trade will, nay, must revive; we may soon have another delusive flush of prosperity—popular discontents may abate—the Chartists may become quiet—nay, the Anti-Corn-Law League may relax amidst the prevailing abundance and cheapness; the middle-class reformers may become inactive; and Sir Robert Peel, proudly showing an increasing revenue and a few small commercial reforms, perhaps one or two satisfactory commercial treaties, may become a prosperous and even popular minister. All this is quite possible; and yet the poison still lurk in the system, to be virulently developed in due time. It is, then, necessary to say, that the sooner the antidote, the only effectual remedy, is sought, the better! We place it, in the first place, in FREE TRADE and in COMPLETE SUFFRAGE—in a truly reformed House of Commons; and without neglecting any other good object, would hold these principles paramount—would *agitate, agitate, agitate* for these. Without an improved house of representatives, every coming Session must be much like the last. Mr. Gisborne, the liberal member for Nottingham, puts the whole matter in what we conceive the true light, when he writes to a meeting for Complete Suffrage, lately held at Leicester, and which we trust will be the precursor of many more before Parliament assembles:—

“Not a single week has passed during my attendance in parliament in the present season, in which my convictions of the necessity of a thorough and impartial reform of our system of suffrage have not been strengthened. The real truth is, that the first object of our legislation, whether it be social, physical, or political, is not the good of the great mass of the inhabitants of the country. I do not believe that a single M.P. is otherwise than desirous of benefiting the people; but four out of five are determined, and indeed almost obliged, to serve

some other class first, and to take care of some other interest before they take care of the interests of the people; and for this simple reason, that they are returned to parliament by some other class, and not by the people. I never met with a man yet who was conjurer enough to tell me how this was to be remedied, except by giving the people a fair share in electing those who ought to represent them. Till some one convinces me that the evils which I have stated above do not exist, or shows me some other means by which they may be removed, I must continue to be an advocate for a complete suffrage. I am sure that the principle, that every member of a society should have a share in making the rules and regulations of the society, is the fairest; and I have never seen or heard anything which has made me doubt that it is the safest principle. I believe it to be very dangerous to have a vast numerical majority included in your society, and to say to them, "You are not good enough, or wise enough, or rich enough to have anything to do in our social arrangements." I hope to see these Conservative principles more generally diffused, and shall therefore rejoice in the success of your patriotic efforts."

This exactly embodies our sentiments, and points to the proper course of action. Is there any Whig chief left to lead the van in such a movement as Mr. Gisborne's principles point to?

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From Chambers's Edinburgh Journal.

#### SMALL-TALK.

SMALL-TALK, as a peculiarity of Great Britain, is ridiculed not only by foreigners, but by natives. Yet I humbly think that it is worthy of adoption by the former, and ought never to be disparaged by the latter. We are said to be a taciturn people. Granted: we do not deny it. We are not fond, on being thrown into strangers' society, of freely dispensing, without preface or premeditation, our ideas on things in general. Our characteristic caution forbids us to run risks; hence we deem it necessary to throw out, before every discussion, certain feelers to ascertain the general current of opinion which runs in the stranger's mind—an excellent expedient for preventing disagreement. Let us suppose two Englishmen seated in a public vehicle. At the end of the first half hour of the journey, it strikes Mr. A. that a little

conversation would not be disagreeable. He glances towards his fellow-passenger to observe what sort of a man he seems. Mr. B., having been thinking exactly the same thing, has made up his mind to perform a similar survey; their eyes consequently meet, and suddenly drop, as if each had been detected in doing something by stealth. This embarrassing circumstance postpones the conversation for a second half hour, and would, in all probability, effectually prevent it, but for the never-failing resource of small-talk. Mr. A., now out of all patience with silence, puts his head out of the window, and, taking a survey of the country around, and of the firmament above, declares—as if he were addressing the turnpike man of the gate they are just passing through—that "It is a fine day!" Mr. B., unwilling to take the speaker's word for the assertion, looks out of the window at his side, and then exclaims, "Very;" whereupon he resumes his lounge in the corner of the coach, but presently adds, that he should not be at all surprised if it were to rain before long. To this Mr. A. modestly dissents, but he is clearly of opinion that the thunder shower of last Tuesday was a very heavy one. A cordial agreement is now come to on the subject of our very variable climate, a point on which we do not remember, indeed, ever to have heard but one opinion in the course of life. Hitherto, all has been small-talk; but now a higher atmosphere is reached. One of the men has studied the recent writers on meteorology, and can talk learnedly on the law of storms, the dew-point, and the theory of Mr. Howard as to the declination of the moon—all of which is particularly instructive to the other, who happens to be sufficiently a man of science both to understand and to profit by it. Now, be it remembered, the solid and useful part of this conversation had its birth in small-talk, and, without small-talk, in all probability, it never would have had any existence at all. Perhaps, however, Mr. A. is a politician, while Mr. B., though not exactly so, is both able and willing to exercise the glorious privilege of a Briton to be as discontented as he pleases. In this case, the remark of Mr. B., that it will probably rain ere long, leads off in a totally different direction. Mr. A., instead of dissenting, agrees with Mr. B. in the opinion that it will rain, and dreads injury to the crops; then, putting on a grave expression of countenance, he looks straight into his companion's face, and begs humbly to inquire, what is to become



of the country if bread rises in price? Mr. B., hereupon, shakes his head very emphatically, and looks all willingness to be assured of the extreme danger in which the commonwealth is at present placed. They go on to discuss the corn and new poor-laws, national distress, free-trade, and bribery at elections; all which subjects are so fully commented upon, that one cannot help regretting that the prime minister or some other member of the administration is not present to profit by the discussion. Now all this, again, owes its origin solely to small-talk.

Hundreds of instances are on record of the inconvenience and danger resulting, in promiscuous companies, from an omission of the ordinary prefaces about the weather, the crops, &c. Bold innovators, regardless of established custom, have been known to get into serious scrapes from a contempt of small-talk, and a too sudden invasion of larger topics. These kind of people pride themselves upon despising the petty fripperies, as they are pleased to call them, of conversation, and boast of a plain spoken, downright style of address, to which it is their pleasure to apply the adjective "honest." Such men—scorning to provide themselves with necessary information regarding the prejudices of their temporary companions by means of the aforesaid preliminary prattle—often unwittingly offend the ears and hurt the feelings of strangers by the most awkward allusions. It is recorded of one of these persons, that, travelling in the inside of a stage-coach, he fell to, without preface or apology, uttering the most uncomplimentary things of Sheridan, then a candidate for the city of Westminster. The subject of the tirade happened to be his fellow-passenger, and for a time held his peace. On alighting at Salisbury to sup, however, Sheridan by some means ascertained his detractor's name and calling, and on resuming the journey, entered into conversation with him. The subject was electioneering, and Sheridan remarked, that the most venal and corrupt voter he knew was one Thomas Brown, a hosier in the Strand. "Why, *my* name is Thomas Brown!" exclaimed the indignant hosier; "and mine," rejoined the wit, "is Sheridan!" Thomas saw that the retaliation was just, and mutual forgiveness followed. Sheridan was a perfect master of talk in all its varieties, but in the use of the small species, he had no equal; and this facility he used so effectually, that the voter changed his opinion of the candidate, and on

returning to town, actually voted for him. It is not always, however, that mistakes arising from a contempt of small-talk end so happily. I have known disastrous consequences result from the similar conduct of several of these John Blunts; such as discussing the merits of the opera before quakers, talking of temperance to a tavern keeper, condemning the last new novel within earshot of its author, and abusing the county member to his face. But enough of these misadventures; let us now address ourselves to the advantages of small talk.

To small-talk many a man owes the great blessing of his existence—of course I mean his wife. His first meeting with her was no doubt at some friendly assembly; for, contrary to the prevalent opinion relative to the place where matches are made, I maintain that, from the middle ranks upward, nine out of ten marriages originate in the ball and drawing-room. At the first meeting a formulary of small-talk is invariably gone through, which in due time leads to more confidential converse. During the pauses of a dance, for example, the young gentleman, after some hesitation, and a few preliminary efforts to strengthen his courage for the undertaking, commences the conversation by inquiring whether the damsel be fond of dancing. The affirmative which he naturally receives closes the charming interchange of words for the present, and he is obliged to break out into another branch of inquiry, by asking how the young lady stands affected towards music—and whether she practices that science? A conversation is at length launched by this successful query, for the lady, after repeating the invariable "yes," is drawn into a discussion concerning the various composers who are most popular at the time. These are the leading varieties of topics for the ball-room; but an exhibition of pictures also serves very well, when any such thing happens to exist at the time and place. It is most inexpedient to start with anything of a less simple and familiar kind. It startles the young lady, and adds to the natural embarrassment of the crisis. I was once a witness to the dire effects of an attempt of this kind. It was at an English watering-place: a friend was extremely anxious to be introduced to a certain young lady at an approaching dance, and I managed to fulfil his wishes so well, that he had the happiness of being her partner in a quadrille. Being far too original a genius to avail him-

self of the old-fashioned queries about music and dancing, he determined to strike out into a new path. The purpose for which he was present in the town being uppermost in his mind, he smiled his best, and tenderly inquired of the lady "if she were fond of swimming?" As might be expected, this question blighted all his hopes: the damsel was dumb to him for ever after.

What, again, would the dinner-table be without small-talk? Medical men assert that a strong exercise of the intellectual faculties is positively injurious to digestion; whilst the cheerful flow of easy insignificant conversation assists it. Luckily, prolonged discussions are impracticable; the different courses interrupt them; and the pleasures of eating and talking cannot be conveniently enjoyed at the same moment. The most that can be ventured is a bare allusion to some public event or private misfortune, a short discussion on a new literary work, or a few surmises as to the good or bad fortune of some recent marriage. When the ladies retire, the range of subjects enlarges, though small-talk ought most undoubtedly to predominate. Men do not meet socially to hear scientific lectures; and all those who would endeavour to introduce them, ought to be handed over to the tender mercies of a punster. The great object is interchange, not monopoly of ideas, and no one is thanked who, eminent in one particular branch of knowledge, takes advantage of that superior attainment to discourse upon it, to the exclusion of topics which would be more interesting to, because better understood by, the rest of the guests. The progress from small-talk (in which every one can share) to subjects of a higher kind should be gradual, and when the interest is manifestly flagging, the small-talk should be resumed, so as to lead up to something more entertaining to the majority. In short, I find the most agreeable after-dinner conversation to be that which is neither too frivolous nor too grave, and which, while it allows of occasional jocularities, admits of remarks both solid and informing.

Meantime, the ladies in the drawing-room are absorbed in small-talk. They know its value too well to allow of any other description of conversation. It is natural, that, as it is their lot to grace and adorn the home and the hearth, the subject of their discussion should be domestic calamities and domestic joys. I have heard that the excellences and faults of their servants—the taste, expensive-

ness, and fashions of female attire; good-natured criticism on the family arrangements of those friends who happen not to be present; the eligibility or imprudence of certain matrimonial unions, which are within their especial ken as likely to be cemented; the delights of shopping, and the proficiency of their children in the various branches of knowledge they are studying at school—form the staple of pleasing gossip of ladies of my own rank in life. But when the gentlemen join, the small-talk takes another direction; the young ladies are addressed on the subject of the various public shows, which they are always assumed to have seen; the Royal Academy exhibition undergoes a severe scrutiny; the last new opera is praised along with the last new novel, and the wonderful fidelity of Daguerreotype miniatures is admitted. To such delightful interchanges of small-talk, then, does many a happy husband love to look back and trace the origin of his bliss.

Besides the pleasures and convenience of small-talk amongst equals, it is an admirable medium of intercourse between the humble and the great; and if no other argument could be adduced in its favour, one fact would alone be enough to answer those superfine folks who condemn it. It is this: the higher you go in rank and education, the more assiduously will you find the art of small-talking cultivated. A late monarch, whose external polish procured for him the name of the "finest gentleman in Europe," was celebrated for the grace and aptness of his small-talk. This gave him the knack of speaking to all persons in their own language, and appearing to sympathise with their ideas—that kind of condescension which places the parties on a level, and sets the inferior at his ease. Suppose yourself, for instance, having occasion to call upon a duke on some matter of business. You have magnificent notions of his state, and the value of his time, and fancy that he will afford you exactly enough of his valuable leisure to transact the affair you are engaged in, and not a minute more. You arrive with punctuality, and are ushered into the library. Presently his grace comes in from a side door, and says, as if he had known you perfectly well, "Good morning, Mr. Hopton;" and you wonder how the duke manages to recollect your name so pat. If you be a merchant, your noble friend will instantly commence advertizing to some topic which is,



as the newspapers say, creating a sensation in the city, because he supposes you will be most at home upon that matter. Perhaps there has been a sudden rise in hops, and you are astonished to find that a duke should be so very conversant with the vicissitudes of the hop market. Presently he pays you the compliment of making you his instructor upon some point connected with your calling; and politely thanks you for the information you afford him. He now knows that you are quite at your ease—that he has dispelled all that awkward feeling which arose from the great disparity of rank; and, as if by accident, he introduces the subject of your visit with, perhaps, “*Apropos* of high prices, regarding the matter to which I am indebted for this call”—and the duke finishes the sentence with a concise statement of his own views on the subject. There is no more small-talk now. The whole business is concentrated, with official precision, into as few words as possible. The discussion ended, the duke rises, wishes you a kind good morning, waits till you have disappeared, and vanishes into his study. “What a pleasing manner!” you exclaim; “what affability!” but if you trace all the duke’s gentle consideration of your feelings, all his politeness to its source, you will see it all took the external form of small-talk. Nor must you suppose it was a matter of chance that his grace knew so much about hops; whatever your profession, he would have appeared equally *au fait*. To let you into a secret, his grace most likely studied his part before you came. In the course of arranging the interview beforehand, he took pains to learn not only your name correctly to a letter, but also your line of life; and “got up” his knowledge of hops for the occasion, that the small-talk might be that which you know most about. This may be acting; but it is no small trouble to study the parts; and who has the benefit of the study? You; for its sole object is to relieve you from embarrassment, and to give you the full use of your faculties for the actual subject of the interview.

Let me not, however, be thought a one-sided advocate of small-talk. I only wish to stem the torrent of disparagement which has set in against it, and to show how useful it is in our passage through life. As a preface to more important chapters of conversation, its utility is, I think, decided: when, on the other hand, it forms the chap-

ters themselves, it is utterly insipid and intolerable. Every man should know how to talk small-talk in its proper place; but no one should habituate his tongue to small-talk continually, though, after all, even that is an amiable weakness. Look around the circle of your acquaintance, and, picking out its small-talker (for there is at least one in every coterie), see if he be not a kind, good-natured, obliging sort of person; take him all in all, a useful member of society. Having nothing weighty to occupy his mind, he is always ready to take any burden off yours; a little gossiping persuasion, and he will run from Dan to Beersheba to do you a favour. All he requires in return is perhaps a cup of tea, and an invitation to your next party. Mix him, in a large soirée, with a host of your friends, and he will turn out a most useful person. His remarks, frivolous as they are, serve to take up the links of conversation which are occasionally dropped; and he not unfrequently heals little dissonances of opinion by the simple plaster of harmless tattle. Then what an untiring auditor he is! It is curious to see the patience with which the small-talker will listen to a philosopher who is anxious to propound some new theory, not so much perhaps for the edification of his hearers, as to show his own erudition. The small-talker stands in an attitude of deep attention. Though it is quite evident he understands but very imperfectly what the speaker is saying, yet at each sentence he interjects some small expression of assent. Shut your ears to the philosopher, keeping them open merely to the sounds uttered by his companion, and you will hear at regular intervals, “O yes”—“Decidedly”—“Just so”—“Indeed!”—“Oh, clearly”—“Very”—“Most undoubtedly”—“No doubt”—“Singular”—“Extraordinary”—“You don’t say so”—“I am entirely of your opinion.” These are trifling complaisances, but they spring from benevolence, and serve an indispensable purpose. Nor is the small-talker useless in other respects: there is a certain kind of information which you will scarcely get from anybody else. He will tell you who lord so and so married, and when; the age of the heir, and the number of brothers and sisters. He knows all the best schools at which to put your boys, and can inform you correctly of the terms and extras. To the female heads of families, the small-talker is invaluable; he is, in fact, a real blessing to mothers; he



can give the addresses of the most fashionable dancing-masters, and recommend the best specifics for the hooping-cough. He furnishes accounts of the most amusing and instructive exhibitions, with the prices of admission, and is ever ready to take the young folks to them. Is there a fine picture brought before the public? the small-talker, instead of descanting on its merits, gives you the private history of the artist. Does a striking article appear in a leading review? Mr. Small-Talk will tell you the name of the author, and how much per sheet he got for writing it. He knows the town address of almost every public character, and of very great men, at what hour they dine. In short, the professed small-talker is a perfect hand-book of diminutive information of every kind.

Never, then, let us hear anything further to the disadvantage of small-talk. Amidst the solids of the social table, it may appear as something which would never be missed, were it absent. Neither, perhaps, would the salt-cellars and casters be missed at first from an actual dining table; but, after the dinner had commenced, how soon would the presence of these articles be found indispensable! So, we verily believe, would it be with small-talk, if by any chance it were to be blotted from the system of things.

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From the Edinburgh Magazine for October.

#### THE QUEEN'S VISIT TO FRANCE.

WE are almost tired of hearing the listless of this world, exclaim, that there is nothing new under the sun. We appeal to the commonsense of our readers, whether, on the recent occasion of Her Majesty's visit to Eu, more empty phrases have not been wasted by the press than would have set up a respectable periodical for a month five-and-twenty years ago?

The larger moiety of the newspapers, English and foreign, have persisted in treating of this pleasant little summer cruise as they would have written of the meeting between Francis I. and Henry VIII., in an age when even a kingly word was scarcely so good as a bond; and when the great object of the great powers of Europe appears to have been, *which* should overreach and steal a march upon the other. The inverted vision of these journalists seems solely endued with a retrospective power. So far from being able to look forward, they cannot even look

around them; or, instead of forewarning Queen Victoria at Eu against the perils that beset Charles V. in Paris, or Francis I. at Madrid, they would have insisted rather on the dangers of indigestion from a Perigord pie, or instructed her to admire at the Court of Louis Philippe the consideration enjoyed by artists and men of letters, who, at that of Pimlico, are reduced to the level of the *valet-aile*.

What far-fetched motives have been sought for this journey, and what ridiculous perils predicted from it! Our young, healthy, happy sovereign, is fond of travelling. By sea or land, she is an active and enjoying tourist. Connected by close ties of relationship with Louis Philippe, so that both his excellent and accomplished daughters have been within these few weeks, and four of his promising sons within a few years, her guests and inmates; the Queen is invited in return, as by friend to friend, to extend her cruise from the Isle of Wight across the Channel, and spend a few days with the Royal Family of France at their private domain of the Château d'Eu. Four centuries ago, perhaps, such an invitation might have been susceptible of invidious interpretation; but it is rendering the vocation of kingship *too* irksome and too degraded, to suppose that the hospitality of one of the most exemplary families in the world, could have no better origin than a paltry political intrigue. We are convinced that the invitation was the result of a mere hospitable impulse. The Queens of England and of the Belgians have long lived together on the footing of sisters. The habits of these two young mothers are of a purely domestic nature, and the young and fatherless family of the Duchess of Orleans possesses peculiar claims to the interest of both. Such are the sympathies which attracted Queen Victoria, after visiting the chief dock-yards of her kingdom, to extend her pleasant excursion to the sunny shores of Normandy. Had mere entertainment been her object, she would have proceeded direct to Paris; but she went to visit an amiable family with whom she was closely connected; and after winning golden opinions from all, by the grace of her deportment, and frankness of her manners, returns into the bosom of her own.—We disgrace ourselves by scepticism as to this simple fact. Incredulity concerning so natural a circumstance does little honour to the humanities of the nation.

Still, viewing the event with the eyes of

1843, we cannot but prognosticate a thousand advantages from the facility thus demonstrated. The more it becomes impressed upon the minds of nations, that kings and queens are no longer pagods to be shut up like images in their shrines, puppets to be played with by dexterous mountebanks, or Escurialized into idiotism, the stronger will become the trust of the world in their responsibility. Had Charles I. and Louis XVI. lived in more locomotive times, the fatal circle, by whose vapours their brains were of-fuscated, would have been broken, and their heads preserved on their shoulders. It is difficult to obtain undue influence over an active and observant sovereign. It is difficult for an active and observant sovereign to remain blind to the happy results of a liberal system of things, practically demonstrated. There is much that is German in our Court of Windsor, which might gain by the influence of the refined liberality of that of the Tuileries. On a recent occasion, for instance, Gudin, a master and commander in the French navy as well as one of the first painters in the world, was refused access to the fêtes of Buckingham Palace, after enjoying, as an honoured guest, those of Louis Philippe and Nicholas I., on the grounds that *he was an artist*;—while Winterhalter, the Lawrence of France, when despatched to Windsor by the king of the French to paint the portraits of the Queen and Prince Albert, was never honoured by a royal invitation. It must have afforded some consolation to these enlightened and distinguished men, to know that Landseer, who has enriched the royal gallery with some of his choicest pictures, and is courted as a guest in half the aristocratic mansions in the kingdom, passes weeks together at Windsor Castle without further notice vouchsafed him than to a corporal of Life Guards. But in affording a balm for their wounded feelings, the fact also supplies to Europe a curious standard whereby to admeasure the refinement and liberality of the British Court. It was not thus that Holbein, Rubens, and Vandyke, were welcomed by Henry and the Stuarts!—It was not thus that the great schools of art were created by the illustrious patrons of Italy. It is not thus that the glorious improvements of Paris, and the regeneration of its galleries, have been effected by the King of the French. For though the Tuileries may have their Dr. Prætorius and their Sir James Clarke, the royal hospitality is not the

less extended to the Scheffers and Vernets;—nay! one of the first distinctions conceded to the boy-author of the fine new tragedy of “*Lucrèce*,” was an invitation to the table of his sovereign.

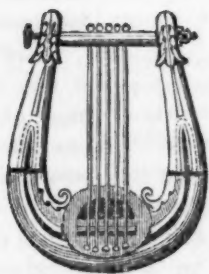
Instead, therefore, of sharing the apprehensions entertained by so many of our contemporaries lest the lovely head of Queen Victoria, and the long head of Lord Aberdeen, should be overreached by the wariness of Louis Philippe, we are not only disposed to believe that, for four short days, the sovereign was merged in the man; but to hope that the simplicity of life adopted by the royal family at Treport, may have afforded a favourable contrast, in the eyes of our youthful queen, to the brocaded buckram of Windsor Castle.

Of this we are certain;—that we can offer no wish more loyal or more auspicious to Queen Victoria and Prince Albert, than that their children may grow up to do them honour in the eyes of the world, and afford them comfort and affection in private life, in the same degree with those they have recently seen constituting the domestic circle of the royal family of the CHATEAU D'EU.

#### THE DUCHY OF CORNWALL.

THE gross Revenues of the Duchy of Cornwall, for the year ending December 31, 1842, were 32,935*l.* 13*s.* 4½*d.*; Salaries and Expenses, 12,833*l.* 13*s.* 4½*d.*, leaving 20,100*l.* for the Prince of Wales. The grossness of these revenues cannot for one moment be questioned. On the accounts being presented to the Prince of Wales, his Royal Highness, who had a mug of milk-and-water in his hand, began to pour over them. We understand that the very gross result of the financial operations of the Duchy was communicated to the Prince of Wales by the Dowager Lady Littleton in the following very appropriate terms:—

Sing a song of sixpence, pockets full of rye,  
One-and-twenty thousand pounds all put by.  
Prince Albert's in the counting-house,  
Counting out the money;  
Sister's in the nursery  
Eating bread and honey.  
John Bull is grumbling  
That things can't be worse,  
When up jumps a little Prince  
And pops off his purse!—[*Charivari.*]



## LINES

*Addressed by a Hungarian Bard to the river on whose banks sleep the remains of one of the greatest Magyar generals.*

O WAVE that glidest swiftly  
On thy bright and happy way,  
From the morning until evening,  
And from twilight until day;  
Why leapest thou so joyously,  
While coldly on thy shore  
Sleeps the noble and the gallant heart  
For aye and evermore?

Or dost thou weep, O river!  
And is thy bounding wave  
But the tear thy bosom sheddeth,  
As a tribute o'er his grave?  
And when, in midnight darkness,  
The winds above thee moan.  
Are they mourning for our sorrows?  
Do they sigh for him that's gone?

Keep back thy tears, then, river!  
Or, if they must be shed,  
Let them flow but for the living—  
They are needless for the dead!  
His soul shall dwell in glory,  
Where bounds a brighter wave,  
But our pleasures with his troubles  
Are buried in the grave!

## THE LEAF-FALL OF THE YEAR.

I NEVER loved the fading,  
I still shrink from the dead:  
I woo'd the blithe and vernal—  
From the stern and sad I fled.  
But the young and gay have left me  
To mate with the worn and sere;  
And 'tis this that makes me welcome  
The leaf-fall of the year!

Hail! hail! declining autumn!  
Like thine my pleasures die;  
My summer hues have vanished,  
My winter time draws nigh.

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I wander with heart blighted,  
Akin to all that's drear;  
And 'tis this that makes me welcome  
The leaf-fall of the year!

Love's sweet spring time hath fled—  
Hope's promised hours have flown;  
My every joy has vanished,  
And left despair alone!  
I've lived to mourn their falsehood,  
The treasured and the dear;  
And 'tis this that makes me welcome  
The leaf-fall of the year.

## LINES

### ON THE DEATH OF A CHILD.

No bitter tears for thee be shed,  
Blossom of being! seen and gone;  
With flowers alone we strew thy bed,  
O blest departed one!  
Whose all of life, a rosy ray,  
Blushed into dawn and passed away.

Yes! thou art gone, ere guilt had power  
To stain thy cherub soul and form;  
Closed is the soft ephemeral flower  
That never felt a storm:  
The sun-beam's smile, the zephyr's breath,  
All that it knew from birth to death.

Thou wast so like a form of light,  
That Heaven benignly called thee hence,  
Ere the cold world could throw a blight  
O'er thy sweet innocence:  
And thou that brighter home to bless  
Art passed with all thy loveliness.

O hadst thou still on earth remained,  
Vision of beauty, fair as brief!  
How soon thy brightness had been stained  
With passion or with grief!  
Now not a sullying breath can rise  
To dim thy glory in the skies.



## SPIRIT AND MATTER.

— and reasoned high  
Of providence, fore-knowledge, will, and fate;  
Fix'd fate, free-will, fore-knowledge absolute;  
And found no end, in wandering mazes lost.

MILTON.

HUMAN life is a struggle between the two everlastingly hostile empires of *Necessity* and *Freewill*, between a man's *spiritual self* and the material world of necessity. The God-given force within has to do battle with the heavy environment of circumstances, and conquer or be conquered. If victorious, then by the nature of things there comes an ever-increasing strength for new toil and new victory. A true soul, however imprisoned by poverty and even sickness, will assert its heaven-granted indefeasable freedom; its right to overcome difficulties, to do work, to

convert possibilities into acquisitions, and to feel gladness.

Insight, spiritual vision, and determination, is the force which in this world all things must obey. But the noblest and most effective energy is not tumultuous but serene; all world-movements, by nature deep, are by nature calm, and flow and swell onwards with a certain majestic quietness; so is the impulse of a truly great man and the effect he manifests on other men.

Thus a man's life and actions are the visible, tangible expression of his spiritual and intellectual character. The thought is not only parent of the deed, but the living soul of it; is the last and continued as well as first mover of it, and is therefore the foundation and beginning and essence of man's whole existence.



## ART AND SCIENCE.

## ENGLAND.

*Norwich Cathedral* has assumed a new appearance; and its spire is converting into an observatory, for the purposes of the trigonometrical survey, now making throughout the kingdom, by order of the Board of Ordnance.

*The Round Church at Cambridge.*—The committee for conducting the restoration of the church of the Holy Sepulchre have just reported progress. The church is celebrated as the oldest of the four round churches (built in imitation of the Holy Sepulchre at Jerusalem) now remaining in England, having been consecrated in the year 1101. Part

of the building fell in 1841, and prompt measures were rendered necessary for its preservation. The walls and columns have been strengthened, and Norman windows have been put up, filled with stained glass of great beauty, the gift of individual contributors, and an entirely new aisle has been erected in the south. The church will be amongst the most curious ecclesiastical monuments of Europe, and will certainly be the most interesting antiquity of Cambridge. The architect's estimate for the completion of the work is £1206 10s. The amount paid for work already done is £2311 2s. 7d. About £2000 have been received in subscriptions.

**A Venerable Oak.**—From one of the venerable oak-trees which adorn the magnificent park of the Earl Digby, at Sherborne (Dorset,) a single limb has recently dropped, which on admeasurement was found to contain upwards of five tons of sound timber. Though thus shorn of so great a limb, the loss is scarcely to be noticed, and the fine old oak still remains in its towering pride and beauty.—*Sherborne Mercury*. [Sherborne Castle belonged to and was built by Sir Walter Raleigh.]

**A Voyage of Discovery.**—A letter from Stockholm, of September 7, says:—"The Swedish brig the *Bull*, Captain Wargresn, has just returned after a three years' voyage. On her arrival at Port Philip, New South Wales, she was freighted by an English firm to visit the small Islands of the Pacific, and obtain for manufactured goods sandalwood and other articles suited to the China market. During this voyage, which lasted about seven months, Captain Wargresn touched at some islands not visited probably since Cook's time, and four others not to be found on the map. The captain took possession of them in the name of King Charles John. The inhabitants were a mild race, ignorant of the use of iron, and ready to give for even a rusty nail a turtle. They were also fond of bits of glass, and would remain for three or four hours shaving themselves with pieces of broken bottles. A single musket shot was sufficient to disperse thousands of them—a proof that they had not before been visited by Europeans. The king of one of the islands presented the captain with his sceptre, made of wood artistically carved, and having a thin circle of jasper on the top. A name was given by the captain to each of those isles after some member of the Royal Family of Sweden, and a quantity of plants, and tools made of stone and wood, have been brought home."

## FRANCE.

**A New Pavement.**—A newly-invented wood pavement has been laid down opposite the residence of the mayor in the rue de l'Ecu. It is a combination of wood and asphalte, possessing seemingly the advantages of both, without the inconveniences of either, being impervious to water, free from danger to horses, and costing twenty-five per cent. less for carriage-roads, and as much as fifty less for foot pavements. Should it answer, we hear it is talked of laying it down hence to Amiens, and running locomotive carriages upon it. It is the invention of Col. Sir. J. Lilly; the cost is said to be about 5s. a yard.—*Boulogne Gazette*.

Ruggi's statue of Lapeyrouse, which has lately been exhibited at the Louvre, is to be erected in Alby, the native town of the celebrated navigator. The exhibition of the statue at the Louvre has excited a considerable share of public interest, whilst at the same time it has revived a painful recollection of the unfortunate fate of two great men, viz., Lapeyrouse and Dumont-Durville, Jean-François Garaupe de Lapeyrouse was born in 1741. On the 1st of August, 1785, he sailed from Brest, with the two frigates, *La Boussole* and *l'Astrolabe*, for the purpose of following up the discoveries of Captain Cook, in conformity with a series of geographical instructions drawn up by the hand of Louis XVI.

For upwards of forty years, his fate and that of his companions was enveloped in mystery, in spite of the most active endeavours to discover traces of them. The last letters received from him were dated from Botany Bay, in the month of March, 1788. At length, in the year 1827, the English Captain Dillon discovered what was presumed to be the place of the shipwreck of Lapeyrouse. It was a reef of rocks, near the Vanikoro islands, northward of New Hebrides. In the following year, February 1828, Captain Dumont-Durville visited the little archipelago, ascertained the melancholy truth, and drew up from the bottom of the sea many portions of the wrecked vessels, together with guns, cannon-balls, anchors, and various other things, which were conveyed to Paris, and deposited in the Musée de la Marine. Captain Dumont-Durville erected on the shore a little monument, with the following inscription: "*A la mémoire de Lapeyrouse, et de ses compagnons, 14 Mars, 1828.*"

Professor Ranke has been in Paris actively engaged in his historical labours. He spends the greater part of every day in the Bibliothèque Royale, where he employs himself in exploring the archives. His company was eagerly sought for in the literary circles of the French capital.

M. Gourdet, a French military officer, who has been for several years in Africa, has recently returned home, bringing with him several objects of curiosity, which he collected during his stay in that part of the world. Among these curiosities is a Koran in Arabic manuscript. It is bound in morocco, once red, and in every respect, presents the appearance of great antiquity. It is not divided into *surates* or chapters, which proves it to be one of the two primitive editions produced at Medina. It is written on thick silk paper, and is adorned with coloured capitals. This Koran belonged to a Marabout of the tribe of Ben-Menasser, and was found in the habitation of the chief of that tribe, by M. Gourdet, after a battle which his battalion fought in that mountainous district of Africa.

M. de Lamartine is said to be busily employed on a work for which he has been during many years collecting materials. It is a "History of the most remarkable Periods of the French Revolution."

M. de Castellane has at length succeeded in carrying into effect his long cherished scheme of founding in Paris a female "Académie Française." Among the objects proposed by this institution are—The distribution of medals to the authoresses of remarkable works; the encouragement of young females in their first literary essays, and the defrayal of the expenses of printing their works; affording pecuniary aid to literary women in straitened circumstances, and providing for the children of those who die in poverty. Among the ladies who are already chosen members of the new academy are, Mmes. Georges Sand, Emile de Girardin, de Bawr, Virginie Ancelot, Anna des Essarts, Clémence Robert, Charles Reybaud, Princess de Craon, Eugénie Foa, Mélanie Waldor, Anais Ségalas, d'Helf, Comtesse Merlin, and several distinguished female painters and musicians.

## GERMANY.

Strangers who visit Weimar have often been much annoyed at not being able to find the house in which Schiller resided; and to obviate this disappointment, it has sometimes been suggested, that the street in which the great man lived should bear the name of "Schillerstrasse." But though the street has not yet been honoured with that appellation, yet the present owner of the house, Frau Weiss, has with good taste distinguished Schiller's abode by placing over the street-door, the simple inscription—"Hier wohnte Schiller." (Here Schiller dwelt.)

The plan of transferring the University of Leipzig to Dresden, which has often been suggested, seems now to be seriously entertained.

The Herculean labour of removing the books belonging to the Court and State Library of Bavaria to the new building erected for their reception in the Ludwigstrasse at Munich, was completed on the 25th of July. The removal occupied upwards of four months. The collection of books exceeding 800,000 volumes, all closely heaped together in the five stories of the old library have been cleaned and arranged in admirable order in the two stories of the new building. In spite of the unfavourable circumstances, and very bad weather which attended the removal of this valuable collection, yet not one of the books or manuscripts has been lost or injured.

Dr. Strauss, the celebrated author of the "Leben Jesu," and other philosophic works which have excited great interest in the learned circles of Europe, is said to be at present engaged in the composition of an opera. Strauss some time ago married a public singer, and this union appears to have animated the learned doctor with inspirations of a less serious character than those which heretofore prompted his labours.

"Goethe's Studentenjahre," (Goethe's Student Years), is the title of a novel recently published at Leipzig, where it has excited a considerable deal of interest. The author, who is understood to be a man of rank, has drawn an admirable portrait of Goethe during the years of his college life; and has introduced into the romance some hitherto unpublished correspondence between the great poet, and other literary characters of his time.

## ITALY.

The letters of Dante, discovered by the German philologist, Theodore Heyse, and which have been described and commented on by professor Karl Witte, of Halle, have recently been published at Verona. The editor, Alessandro Torri, accompanies each letter with notes of his own, and with the commentaries of Witte and Fraticelli. At the close of the volume, the editor has inserted a dissertation on earth and water, written by Dante, at Verona, in 1320, the year preceding his death. This remarkable treatise was first printed in Venice, in 1508, and reprinted at Naples, in 1576, but it had become so scarce, that a copy existing in the library of the Marquess Trevulzio, at Milan, was considered as precious as a manuscript. From that copy the reprint has been made.

The King of Naples has appointed the celebrated composer Mercadante, director-general of all the theatres of that capital.

Some manuscripts of Galileo which were presumed to have been lost, or burned by order of the Inquisition, have been found among some old archives in the Palazzi Pitti. This discovery has created a wonderful degree of interest in Florence. It proves that the Inquisition, which was accused, may be calumniated; a fact of which many persons entertained considerable doubt. Be that as it may, the manuscripts, besides being objects of curiosity, are likely to be useful to astronomical science, inasmuch as they contain information respecting the eclipses of former times, a course of the satellites of Jupiter, subjects to which Galileo directed great attention.

Amari's historical work, the suppression of which by the Neapolitan government, excited so much interest, is about to be published in Paris, with considerable additions by the author. Amari has taken up his abode temporarily in Paris, where he enjoys the society of a few of his literary countrymen, who like himself have been driven by despotism to seek refuge in foreign lands.

Several splendid works on art, with illustrative copper-plate engravings, have recently been undertaken at Rome, at the expense of the Papal government. No sooner were the plates of the Etruscan Museum completed, than the publication of the Egyptian Museum, the second gigantic creation of the reigning pope, was resolved upon. Cardinal Tosti has agreed to pay 8000 scudi for the execution of the plates, to Troiani, the eminent architectural engraver. The learned antiquarian, Father Ungarelli, has undertaken to write the text for this important work. Father Secchi has finished his elaborate treatise on the Mosaics found in the Thermæ of Caracalla. In the preface he expresses a hope that his Holiness will assign the Palace of St. Giovanni as a depository for these valuable Mosaics.

## PRUSSIA.

On the 7th of August the "Medea" of Euripides was performed in the theatre attached to the Palace of Potsdam, in the presence of the king, the royal family and the court. This is the second essay made by the King of Prussia for the dramatic representation of ancient Greek tragedy. The "Antigone" of Sophocles was performed about a year ago, and the chorusses of that piece were set to music by Mendelssohn. But the structure of the choruses of "Medea" appeared to Mendelssohn, as well as to Meyerbeer, less favourably adapted to musical composition than the choruses of "Antigone." This opinion induced both those eminent composers to decline the task of arranging them, the more especially as their talents are employed on other musical subjects, in which the king takes a deep interest. His Majesty therefore gave the commission to the Music Director, Taubert, by whom it has been executed in a highly satisfactory style. Donner's translation of the tragedy was selected for the performance.

The Opera House at Berlin, which was destroyed by fire on the 18th of August, was built by Frederick the Great, who himself drew the plan for it



whilst he was Prince Royal. The theatre was opened on the 7th of December, 1742, with Graun's opera of "Cæsar and Cleopatra." It was capable of containing 4000 spectators. This fire has destroyed property amounting in value to 500,000 thalers. The collection of music, which was fortunately saved, is supposed to be worth 60,000 thalers.

His Majesty the King of Prussia, animated by a desire that the musical portion of the church service in his dominions should share the improvement consequent on the advancement of art, last year commissioned Mendelssohn Bartholdy to reform the music of the Lutheran church. A few weeks ago service was performed in the Cathedral of Berlin, in celebration of the Anniversary of the Treaty of Verdun. The king and the royal family were present, and then, in the performance of protestant worship, an application was for the first time made of the grand music of the modern school.

In the composition of the hymns and psalms, Mendelssohn Bartholdy has employed all the resources of art to impart to them a due solemnity and grandeur of character. These new compositions consisted of recitatives, solos, choruses, and concerted pieces for four, six and eight voices, with accompaniments for an orchestra and two organs. They were executed by six hundred performers, partly professors and partly amateurs, under the direction of Mendelssohn. The effect was magnificent, and at the conclusion of the service, the king summoned the composer to the royal pew, and expressed his satisfaction in the most flattering terms.

A letter has recently been received from the celebrated Prussian missionary Gatzloff, who is at present in China. It contains the following curious observations:—"I have obtained uncontradictable evidence that the art of constructing buildings of cast iron was practised several centuries ago in the celestial empire. I found on the summit of a hill near the town of Tsing-Kiang-Foo, in the province of Kiang-Nan, a pagoda entirely formed of cast iron, and covered with bas-reliefs and inscriptions. The dates and the form of the characters belong to the period of the dynasty of the Tsangs, who occupied the throne as early as the fifth or sixth century of the Christian era. This monument may be presumed to be twelve hundred years old, is seven stories high, and each story contains curious historical pictures. The structure is singularly elegant in its form, and surpasses any thing of the kind I have hitherto seen."

In a lecture recently delivered by von Raumer at the University of Berlin, the learned professor made some just remarks on the absurd custom of introducing foreign words and phrases into the German language. "Our rich, pure, racy, flexible, and vastly comprehensive language," he observed, "is corrupted, not merely in the journals, but in literary and scientific writings, and even in the draughts for public laws. The German language is clothed in a motley garment of foreign words and phrases, which would have disgraced the worst period of the seventeenth century. In a late number of the "State Gazette," which is almost entirely filled with the reports of legislative acts, the following foreign

words appear." (Here the lecturer quoted no less than 112 foreign terms, for which it would have been easy to have found German synonymes.) "Thus," continued Herr von Raumer, "we work the destruction of our noblest inheritance, our medium of thought and expression. We have among us too much of that arrogant conceit, which discards with contempt the rules of the vernacular tongue, too much of the indolence which will not be troubled to gather up the treasures that lie scattered around;—too much of the frivolity which loves to bedeck itself in foreign tinsel;—and too much of the affectation which lays claims to superior cultivation. In this respect, at least, the French have the advantage of us. They would never tolerate such a disfigurement of their comparatively poor language."

#### BELGIUM.

M. Fetis, the well known musical historian and critic, has recently made some discoveries in the Royal Library at Brussels, which promise to furnish valuable contributions to the history of music. Among the books of plain chant in the Library, he has found a volume of masses and motets by celebrated composers who lived about the end of the fourteenth and beginning of the fifteenth centuries. The most important pieces of this volume are three masses each for three voices by Guillaume Dufay; two masses for four voices by the same composer; a mass for three voices by Binchois; the mass "Omnipotens Pater" for three voices, by a composer named Jean Plourmel; and the mass "Deus creator omnium," by an English composer named Rignardt (Richard) Cox. All these masters wrote during the interval between 1380 and 1420.

During the last few years Belgium has rendered a just tribute of honour to several of her illustrious sons, by erecting public monuments to their memory. Some time ago a statue of Gretry was erected in front of the University of Liege; and a statue of Van Eyke (better known by the name of John of Bruges), the inventor of oil-painting, was placed in one of the squares of his native city. The recently finished monument to Rubens has been erected on the Place Verte, at Antwerp. It consists of a finely executed bronze statue, larger than life, raised on a marble pedestal. The model from which the statue was cast is the work of Geefs, the sculptor. The statue and all its accessories were completed on the 13th of August, on which day its inauguration was celebrated by public rejoicings. The great master of the Flemish school of painting is represented standing, and his shoulders are draped by the ample folds of a long mantle. He wears a sword, and round his neck is a chain, from which a medallion is suspended. On one side of the figure is a stool, on which a palette is lying. The expression of the head is very fine, and the resemblance is striking.

#### EGYPT.

Extracts from the Letters of Professor Lepsius, published under the authority of the Prussian government.

*"On the Ruins of the Labyrinth, at Mæris, June 20, 1843.*

"For some weeks past we have had our camp pitched on the ruins of the Labyrinth. I write to Cairo, for the purpose of communicating to you by

the packet which sails from Alexandria on the 27th, the first intelligence of the definitive discovery and examination of the real labyrinth of the Mæris Pyramid. It was impossible, even on the first superficial inspection, to doubt that we had the Labyrinth before us and beneath our feet, though early travellers have scarcely mentioned these structural remains. We at once discerned some hundreds of chambers rendered plainly perceptible by their walls. When you shall have an opportunity of seeing the plan drawn by Herr Erbkam, the architect, who has devoted great labour to his task, you will be astonished to perceive how much still remains of these remarkable edifices. Former descriptions, even those of Jomard and Courtelle, do not correspond with the localities as we found them on the spot; and my confidence in the representations of Perring, Colonel Vyse's able architect, is greatly diminished on account of his sketches of these ruins. All that is in best preservation, the part lying to the west of the chasm Bahr Sherkié, is omitted; neither has Mr. Perring given the original circumference of the whole. The chasm Bahr Sherkié seems to have been the principal stumbling-block to previous travellers; but we easily passed it by placing across it two poles, and so forming a sort of bridge.

"The principal results of our exploration is the monumental evidence of the name Mæris—the confirmation of the actual construction of the Labyrinth for a palace, and of the Pyramid for a tomb. We have here also the confirmation of the account of Manethon, who placed Mæris in the 12th dynasty, and not the 17th, as has been supposed. With this letter I send you a 'Treatise on the Structure of the Pyramids,' which I wrote at Cairo, when recovering from a severe attack of illness. I am also forming a collection of the stones found in the Labyrinth. They will interest you on account of the prevalence of black minerals, as you doubt the existence of basalts of the proper olive kind. I have likewise collected some specimens of the innumerable kinds of pottery, fragments of which have been employed in covering and facing the chambers of the Labyrinth. The same sort of facing with shell or thin pieces of stone or tile,—or what may be called ostracious structure,—we had previously observed in the ruins of Memphis. Our drawing of the ruins of Memphis, also the work of Erbkam, exhibits the ground plan of that splendid structure. We live altogether here in the greatest harmony, enjoying excellent health. We submit to the various unavoidable plagues indigenous to this land of Egypt, and of which we have already had no slight experience, but we have passed through them with spirits undepressed, and tempers unruffled."

In another letter from Professor Lepsius, of the same date as the above, he writes as follows:

"Since the 23d of May, our camp has been pitched near the southern foot of the Pyramid of Mæris. This said Mæris reigned from 2194 to 2151 before our era, and was the last king of the Egyptian empire before the conquest of the Hyksos. The Labyrinth, and more especially the Lake Mæris, are testimonies of his power, of his love of grandeur, and of his proneness to great undertakings for the general benefit of the country. Contemporaneous with our arrival at Fayoum, M.

Linant, the French architect in the service of the pasha, who devotes himself chiefly to hydraulic works, made the highly interesting discovery (which he has described in a special treatise,) that the ancient Lake Mæris, which has hitherto been an object of anxious research with the learned, no longer exists; the water having nearly all been carried off by some channel, whilst there remains only a portion of the gigantic dam by which it was kept back. Throughout the whole province no lake is to be found except Birket-el-Kerun, which lies to the north-west; therefore it would be a remarkable instance of injudicious criticism to refer to it the descriptions of the ancients; since it has neither been the work of human hands, nor did it ever water the principal town Crocodilopolis and the Labyrinth. Neither is the existence of its fishery proved by the fact of the saline property of its waters. Besides, it does not lie in the specified direction, nor does it encircle two pyramids, and the great object which fame has recorded, could not have been adequately accomplished by it. That object was to intercept the water during the overflowing of the Nile, and to let it out again in the season of drought; thus supplying due moisture for the plains of Memphis and the adjoining provinces of the Delta. The dry lake discovered by Linant is bounded by dams of one hundred and sixty feet in breadth, and is equal in extent and depth to the Birket-el-Kerun Lake. It perfectly fulfils all the required conditions, and this would be recognised by any impartial eye, for the ground which yet embraces the whole of that part of the province is apparently soil from the bed of the lake. We daily look out from the Labyrinth, not across the water as Herodotus looked, but over the black bottom of Lake Mæris towards the minarets of Fayoum, the present capital of the province of the same name, built partly on the ruins of the ancient Crocodilopolis. However if it was difficult to find the ancient Lake of Mæris in Birket-el-Kerun, it certainly was not more easy to overlook the Labyrinth, the ruins of which correspond with the descriptions of the ancients in all respects. The agreement as to distances is generally exact, as also are the relative positions of the real lake Crocodilopolis. The pyramid in which Mæris was interred lies to the south of the great plain of ruins, and to the south is the village mentioned by Strabo now only ruins, and separated from the site of the Labyrinth by a later eruption of water. With respect to the ruins themselves, present observers must not rely entirely on their own eyes, whether in surveying the portions now existing, or comparing them with the accounts of more early travellers. Where those travellers saw only formless heaps of rubbish and a few walls, we found, even on the first rapid inspection, several hundreds of chambers and corridors, of different sizes, some with roofs, floors, and partitions; with pedestals for pillars and stone facings. In two of these structures, which had four flats, one above the other, we observed none of those hole-like windings described in early accounts. Though all the walls have their directions in conformity with the celestial rhumbs, yet we found so much irregularity in their structure, and so much variety in the forms of the rooms, that at first we could not thread our way through the mass of buildings without the



help of a guide. Three thousand rooms below and above ground are mentioned by Herodotus, and from the remains which we have before us, this number seems by no means excessive. The forms of the more important parts of the palace are not now discernible. According to Herodotus, they consisted of twelve aulæ, that is to say, open courts, surrounded by covered colonnades. The site of the palace, which was surrounded on three of its sides with the mass of labyrinthine chambers, is now a large deep square, spotted here and there with low hillocks of rubbish, and intersected by an oblique canal or ravine. In this hollow our colony is now encamped: and a number of little huts, built with the bricks of the pyramids, almost picture to the mind's eye the ancient village described by Strabo, which stood on the same level with the Labyrinth. Around us, on every side, lie scattered immense blocks, some of granite, others of a white and very hard kind of calcareous stone, resembling marble. Fragments of the ancient columns and architraves of the aulæ are likewise visible. These remains have acquired much interest by our expedition; for we have found in different fragments the name of the founder of the Labyrinth, Mæris, and of his sister who succeeded him. On the summit of the pyramid of Mæris, commanding a view of every thing to a great distance, we have planted the Prussian eagle, as a symbolical evidence that northern science has had the gratifying task of describing these remains of antiquity so remote. We daily employ one hundred labourers on the ruins, making excavations to facilitate the examination of the foundations of the structures and their ground-floors; cleaning out the apartments, and laying open the proper entrance to the pyramid. We are now on the north side, crowded into a large chamber formed in the rock, the floor of which is in part covered with thin plates, and the walls faced with other lamina. This chamber was entirely filled with rubbish, beneath which we found the often described and figured stones, having the name of Mæris and of his royal sister inscribed on them. It is, however, still not quite evident that this was the sepulchral vault, which might indeed be expected to be found more in the centre of the pyramid. At any rate, the determination of the historical question of the founder is, by the discovery of the hieroglyphic names, the most important result that we could have been expected to reach; we shall therefore leave this memorial place with more satisfaction than, from the descriptions of preceding travellers, we had reason to anticipate. This will be clearly seen as soon as our zealous and indefatigable architect, Erbkam, shall have finished his special plan of the Labyrinth, which will assuredly make one of the most remarkable plates of our collection. He will accompany me on a tour for the inspection of other interesting objects in this province. We shall then have completed our course over the first pyramid station or stadium. We shall probably pass rapidly through central Egypt, to take for ourselves in Thebes, a proper position, before we commence our journey to Meroë. That journey we must be obliged to postpone until April in the ensuing year, in order that we may be inured to the ungenial climate which may then have spent its whole force upon us."

The above is all that has yet appeared of the last

letters received in Berlin. To the official publication of the extracts by the Prussian government, the following note is added:

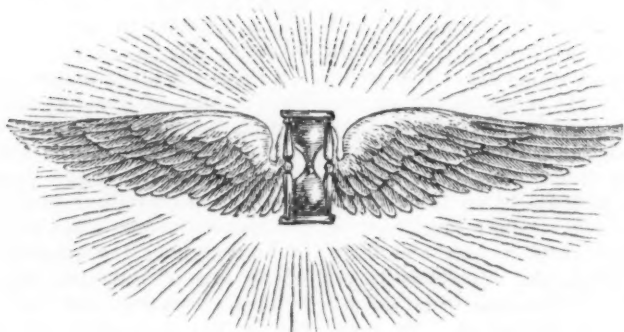
"From the introduction to the Treatise 'On the Construction of the Pyramids,' which Professor Lepsius has sent to the Academy, we perceive that in the expedition to the Pyramids of Giseh one hundred and six tombs were explored, of which drawings of only three or four have been given by previous travellers. They are all exceedingly copious in hieroglyphic representations and inscriptions, which are of immense importance in throwing light on chronology and history, arts and manners, and for the explanation of the Egyptian character and language. We have already in deposit in Cairo a collection of original documents and memorials, which relate to twenty great monuments, and which would load more than thirty camels. There are already five hundred sheets of impressions on paper of the most interesting inscriptions, and we have above three hundred drawings in great folio. Nearly all the sepulchres are of the fourth and fifth Manethonian dynasties, or three thousand and twenty-five hundred years before our era. The *Camera lucida* has been of good service to us in making these copies and drawings.

Our topographic plans embrace the whole coast of the desert as far as it is covered with pyramids. These monuments succeed each other along a margin of four and a half geographical miles (eighteen English) in a row almost entirely uninterrupted from Abu Roash, three leagues north of the Giseh Pyramids to near Dahshar. Thence in a series towards the south are the pyramidal groups of Lishb, Meidom, and Fayoum, to the extent of about ten geographical miles (a German geographical mile is equal to four English). Dr. Lepsius is of opinion that the pyramids of Sakhara are of more modern creation than those of Giseh. The two large stone pyramids of Dahshar, which are attributed to the third Manethonian dynasty, are, in the opinion of Lepsius, the most ancient of any. Numerous drawings accompany the treatise, whereby it appears that the pyramids are of various construction. The greater number of them have a small one internally as a nucleus. This may be seen in the stone pyramid of Sakhara and in those of Meidom, Abusir, and Illahun, which mantle-like encompassing the nucleus, are of necessity gradually elevated and enlarged."

#### SOUTH AFRICA.

Lieutenant Christopher, of the Indian Navy, who was despatched from Aden by Captain Haines to survey the coast of Africa, has succeeded in discovering a splendid river to the Northward of the river Jub, which he entered and traced for one hundred and thirty miles. As he advanced, he found it increase in width and depth; and according to the report of the natives, a civil and obliging race, it continued to do so for the next four hundred miles. The river is described to be from two hundred to three hundred feet wide, and sixty feet deep; a clear meandering stream, with banks in a high state of cultivation, yielding all kinds of grain, which are abundant and cheap. Mr. Christopher named his discovery the "Haines River."





## OBITUARY.

**ALDERMAN SIR MATTHEW WOOD.**—The death of Alderman Sir Matthew Wood, Bart., one of the members for the City of London, took place at Gloucester on Monday morning, at four o'clock, after a long and severe illness. The alderman was in the 76th year of his age, having been born on the 2d of June, 1768. For more than a quarter of a century he has been one of the most conspicuous and influential members of the corporation; has filled all the highest offices connected with it, and has taken an active part in every political question which has agitated the public mind during his time. After filling several offices of lesser importance, he was chosen, at a comparatively early age, as alderman for his ward, and served in his turn the office of Lord Mayor. The estimation in which his character and services were held by his fellow citizens was evinced by his being returned to the Court of Aldermen a second time, and selected as the Chief Magistrate for the year ensuing. Without dwelling on the fact that Alderman Wood was strongly opposed to the majority of his brother aldermen in politics, this was contrary to the order of succession which the Court of Aldermen desires to maintain in the selection of Lord Mayor. The act being performed by political opponents, shows that party views had no influence in obtaining the unusual and honourable distinction. In 1818 Alderman Wood was returned to Parliament as one of the members for the City of London. The industry and integrity with which he had served his fellow-citizens in the various civic posts to which they had called him, obtained for him this additional honour. How well he deserved it was seen in the manner in which he performed the duties it involves. At each successive election, whatever changes might attend the relative positions of other candidates at the hustings, Wood was almost invariably returned at the head of the poll. It is almost unnecessary to say that Alderman Wood was Liberal, and that he remained consistent to those principles through good and evil report. The citizens showed their appreciation of his principles and consistency by electing him as their representative in no less than nine successive Parliaments, a longer service than we believe has fallen to the lot of any of his predecessors.

Alderman Wood took a prominent part in the cause of Queen Caroline. This drew down upon him the concentrated bitterness of a portion of the press, but the triumph which was achieved by pub-

lic opinion over the Monarch and his Ministers was the first effective blow which Toryism received. It reeled under it, and never recovered its former influence, though it struggled long to counteract its defeat.

To bestow upon Alderman Wood a baronetcy was one of the earliest exercises of the Royal prerogative by her present Majesty. Whether that, however, was conferred upon Sir Matthew at the immediate recommendation of the Minister, in consideration of political services, or whether, according to rumours current at the time, it was conferred on account of services rendered long before her present Majesty ascended the throne, certain it is that no time was lost in raising him to the rank which he enjoyed, though many political friends of the Ministry, eventually raised to the same rank, were obliged to wait for their baronetcies till the coronation.

It must be fresh in the recollection of the public that the late James Wood of Gloucester, the well-known miser, made a will, which gave rise to much litigation, in which Sir Matthew Wood was a party deeply interested. How far the anxieties consequent upon so important a suit may have injured a constitution already borne down by the weight of years, it is not now very material to inquire; Sir Matthew is no more.

**RIGHT HON. STUART MACKENZIE.**—On the 24th September, at Southampton, the Right Hon. Stuart Mackenzie, late Lord High Commissioner of the Ionian Islands, in his 60th year.

The death of Mr. Stuart Mackenzie, removes one who had risen to a high station in the official world. He was the eldest son of Admiral the Honourable Keith Stuart, second son of the sixth Earl of Galloway; and he married, in 1818, the relict of Admiral Sir Samuel Hood, eldest daughter and co-heiress of the last Lord Seaforth, whose surname he assumed by sign-manuel. He was Commissioner of the India Board from 1832 to 1834; represented Cromarty from 1831 to 1837; when he was appointed Governor of Ceylon. In December 1840, he became Lord High Commissioner of the Ionian Islands.

**BARON VON RUMOHR.**—Baron von Rumohr, a distinguished connoisseur of art, died lately at Dresden, he was a well-known contributor to several of the German periodicals, especially the "Morgen Blatte."





*Painted by A.E. Chalon, I.A.A.*

## THE PAINTER'S STUDIO.

*Engraved for CAMPBELL'S FASHION AND MONTHLY MAGAZINE, Vol. IV, No. 1.*